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WOMEN IN TRADE UNIONS IN SAN FRANCISCO*

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INTRODUCTION

Policies concerning the rights of those working for others have been adopted largely on the basis of conclusions reached by discussion from the outside. In spite of the fact that the workers themselves have their opinions about the practicability of existing laws, their interpretation of labor's place in the existing scheme, and their ideals with regard to the level of life they wish to attain, these opinions have not as yet found sufficient expression to be a marked or universal formative influence in social concepts. This truth is even more noticeable when women's work is the problem under consideration.

Women have not had the incentives to arouse much conscious and concerted effort to put into form their opinions about industrial conditions. Association has not come so naturally to them outside of working hours as it has to men, who are open to the freer, casual companionship on the street and elsewhere, or who might be thrown together at political meetings and learn the effect of organization and discussion. The fact that women's work is often regarded as temporary in character has deterred them from taking any active interest in establishing permanent changes in the conditions surrounding their work. They have not as a general rule felt a real identification with the trade adopted by them. The attitude of society toward women, moreover, has had no inconsiderable influence. Disapproval has so

frequently been voiced against the woman who sought employment in store or factory, so much unjust and shallow criticism has been uttered against the woman who has been forced into line with the present economic and industrial organization that it is not surprising that a great many working girls are sensitive about admitting their occupation. In addition, aggression on the part of women has received so large a measure of condemna- and ridicule that women have naturally been hesitant about making vocal any complaints or demands.

For a variety of reasons, then, we have not as yet had any considerable or definite expression from women workers themselves with regard to the working conditions which would appear to them desirable and just. In order that safe conclusions may be reached as to policies which are wise for industrial control, it is necessary that society should pay heed to the opinions of the workers, who are an indispensable factor in production and who are entitled to their measure of that respect and honor which is a part of the remuneration due to every person who adds to the wealth of the world. For the solving of social problems the workers bring a valuable contribution of wisdom gained through experience which should be the basis of any action which concerns them. Trade organizations are the most effective conductors of the opinions of labor to the rest of society, and in seeking to gain a comprehension of what women workers believe and what they have been able to accomplish for themselves, we naturally turn to the women in trade unions.

EARLY HISTORY

The earliest record of organization among women working in San Francisco is found on February 24, 1888, when the "Ladies' Assembly 5855, Knights of Labor," met and discussed the helpless condition of the unorganized girls and women.[1] As a first step a committee from the Ladies' Assembly visited the Representative Council of the Federated Trades on the following Friday evening to ask the coöperation and moral aid of that body for the new effort. The council was interested in the presentation of the need for organization among women, and, in turn, appointed a committee which arranged for a mass meeting to be held on March 14, 1888. At this meeting a number of prominent speakers appeared and considerable interest was aroused in bettering the conditions for working girls. One speaker thus described some of the features of the existing situation: "This is a comparatively new country, and there should not be any complaint, yet there is. We find that in the ordinary industries a man receives from twenty-five per cent to fifty per cent more money than a woman for the same amount of service. The only way for women to ameliorate their condition is to organize for their own protection."[2]

The *Coast Seamen's Journal*, at that time the paper which voiced the general trade-union sentiment, did all in its power to arouse the interest of the organized men. In describing the need for action it says: "The condition of the working girls is worse than slavery. They have to work for a mere pittance, and hundreds of them are employed in basements where the light of day never penetrates. In many factories they are compelled to work alongside of Chinamen, and in some places, they are under Chinese foremen. This, indeed, is a sad state of affairs, and their condition can only be better by organization."[3]

[1] *Coast Seamen's Journal*, February 25, 1888; *San Francisco Examiner*, February 25, 1888.

[2] *San Francisco Examiner*, March 15, 1888.

[3] *Coast Seamen's Journal*, March 21, 1888.

At the time of this agitation the "Girls' Union," a project which was instituted by a number of San Francisco women, received considerable ridicule from the working people. The directors of this club planned to open day and evening classes where the different branches of housework would be taught. In the newspapers they announced their willingness "to confer with any respectable girls from twelve to eighteen years of age that are interested in the formation of such classes."[4]

The design of the directors of the "Girl's Union" evidently met with no response, for we find them complaining that no one had applied for instruction.[5] They said they needed strong, willing girls for domestic service and could find places for 5000 good girls. The managers of the club instituted a scheme for sending abroad to bring girls over on the promise of employment. When explaining their plans, the directors spoke of the open hostility with which they were regarded by the trade-unions.[6] For the enlightenment of the public, the *Coast Seamen's Journal* gives an explanation of labor's attitude toward the "Girls' Union."

"There at present exists," says that paper in an editorial, "a so-called Girls' Union, managed by ladies of a philanthropic and religious turn of mind, and while we believe they mean well, their mode of procedure is not such as will emancipate our sisters from the slavery and socially degrading position which they at present are placed in. The girls have nothing to say in the management of the affairs of the society, and it is nothing more or less than an employment agency for domestics. The ladies on the committee from Assembly 5855, Knights of Labor, are *working* women who have had experience in the labor movement, and they not only deserve the co-operation and aid of labor organizations, but should have the assistance and encouragement of all honest men and women who have the cause of labor at heart. It is a fact which cannot be disputed that girls working in factories and stores do not receive, in most cases, sufficient remuneration to pay their board, and in all cases, they have to work for less than men for doing the same kind of work. It is true that women employed in household work are better paid, but the hours of work are so long and the position is considered so degrading on account of the haughty and tyrannical demeanor of their own sex who employ them, that girls of spirit do not want to accept situations as domestics. Such exclusiveness, haughtiness, and tyranny are no doubt considered by our female 'codfish' aristocracy

[4] *Daily Alta California*, February 24, 1888.
[5] *Daily Alta California*, March 25, 1888.
[6] *Ibid.*

as the essential elements which constitute a lady, and as we are under the impression that they are 'a little off,' we would refer them to Webster, but probably they do not consider him an authority. The condition of the girl who takes a position as a domestic servant is indeed deplorable. The only time she has to herself is a few hours' liberty every second Sunday evening. If she accompanies her mistress and children for a walk or drive she is compelled to wear a white apron and cap, so that the public may know she is a 'servant.' American girls do not consider it a disgrace to do housework, but they do consider it a disgrace to wear a domestic livery and they object to being caged up like slaves for two weeks at a time. Our girls, therefore, prefer working in stores and factories where, if they have to work for starvation wages, when their day's work is done they are free. Those who are agitating the organization of the working women and girls are aware of the many difficulties and obstacles which stand in the way but when the Ladies Assembly takes anything in hand it generally stays with it."[7]

For a time the movement for organizing women promised successful development. The various unions made contributions and the managers of the Tivoli theater gave a benefit performance, the proceeds of which went to further the effort. No record of any definite accomplishment can be found, however. After all, the men regarded the question in a rather light mood, assuming that women's work was but a passing phase without permanent significance.[8] Real sympathy with the problems of the girl herself who was attempting to earn her living did not find much expression. The question seemed rather to be considered in relation to its effect upon men. One editorial remarks:

"There can be no doubt that the constant tendency of wages to decrease in all branches of industry is, in a great measure, due to the cheap labor furnished by women. We need not go outside of the city of San Francisco to find corroborating illustrations for this assertion. Several of our San Francisco unions, such as the printers and cannery workers, and many others, have been severely baffled in their efforts to maintain wages at a living standard on account of female competition. The question is naturally a delicate one, and men are prone to make concessions to their employers rather than involve their women co-workers in the unpleasant features which more or less characterize a strike. But as the chances for work grow scarcer and ever greater numbers of workers of both sexes are dragged into the maelstrom of competition, the feeling of consideration gradually ceases and the esthetic trait dwindles down to a minimum."[9]

[7] *Coast Seamen's Journal*, February 29, 1888.
[8] Interview with Mr. Walter Macarthur.
[9] *Coast Seamen's Journal*, May 2, 1888.

The article ends with a strong plea to the women to organize, if not for their own sake individually for the sake of other workers.

While not resulting in any immediate action on the part of employed women, the publicity attendant upon the discussion of the service trade-unionism might render to women who were earning their own living was evidently suggestive of a possible way of relief from hardship long endured in silence, and of hope for assistance should the working girls become daring enough to protest against conditions which threatened their already precarious livelihood. On July 16, 1890, the sewing girls appealed to the Federated Trades in a communication which describes the difficulties of their position. This letter said:

"There are from fifty to sixty girls employed, and from fifteen to twenty men. The girls mostly do piece-work, and if late in the morning are severely reprimanded by the forewoman. We are never allowed to go until time to stop work, and if late or absent are always asked to give an account of ourselves, but the men never are detained or questioned. This same firm hires the power to run its machines to buttonhole, embroider, do tucking, cording, and sewing. Every girl has to pay twenty-five cents per week for the power to run her machine; has to pay for all repairs, supply oil and needles and attachments. They also have to lose time while repairing is being done. A great many times the power is shut off; then the girls are kept just the same, sometimes putting in three-quarters of a day waiting, even though the firm knows there will be no work.

"Our wages are very low, as we have had to compete with the Chinamen. This firm has considerable of their work done in Chinatown; and often we are told that we are only kept to work out of charity, as they could get the work done cheaper if they gave it all to Chinamen.

"A new hand makes from 50 cents to $2 and the best worker makes $6 per week. The average is about $4, and for girls who have no homes it is impossible to live on such wages in this city. The twelve or fifteen men get good wages—the head cutter getting $5 per day, the rest average $2.50 per day, which must come from the profits of the work of the girls—an unequal division.

"I am not complaining of the present prices but of the threat held over us, that next week the prices will be reduced twenty-five per cent—the girls' pay to be reduced but not the men's. Nor will the firm be contented with less profit, and plan and scheme to enrich themselves from us, while we are being driven to the almshouse or worse."[10]

[10] *Coast Seamen's Journal*, July 23, 1890.

Evidently a union was formed at this time, for, on July 30, 1890, we find a resolution of the Coast Seamen's Union declaring that since the girls had organized and adopted a stamp, the Seamen's Union would pledge itself to give the women all possible assistance and to buy only shirts bearing the stamp of the "Coöperative Shirt-makers of the Pacific Coast."

It was in 1890 also that the millinery girls exercised their right of protest. They formed a temporary association with the purpose of securing more definite working hours. After a short, intense campaign, the girls persuaded the stores to close at six o'clock. This was accomplished without receiving any instructions as to procedure from the chairman of the organizing committee of the Federated Trades—a fact which the leaders in the labor movement of the time felt should cause him some chagrin.[11] The millinery girls were urged to form themselves into a permanent union but did not do so. Their victory was not enduring, for ten years later the millinery girls had the same battle to fight again.[12] On November 23, 1900, they once more formed a temporary organization and instituted a strike for shorter hours. They declared that they were required to work fifteen hours a day and demanded that the stores close at six o'clock in the future. The trouble lasted for almost a month before any settlement could be reached; the employers then signed an agreement to give early closing a trial excepting during the busy months of April, May, October, and November. The Labor Council organizing committee advised the girls to remain together in a permanent union, but, as in the previous instance, they were unwilling to take such action.[13]

Not until 1891 was there any organization among women coherent enough to receive recognition from the Council of Federated Trades. This was the Boot and Shoe Fitter's Protective Union, which is described on a later page. The various unions in trades at which women were employed included the women in their membership, as will appear lated, but for the next nine years there seems to have been no agitation exclusively

[11] *Coast Seamen's Journal*, October 29, 1890.
[12] *San Francisco Examiner*, November 23, 1900.
[13] *San Francisco Examiner*, December 2, 10, and 17, 1900.

concerned with working women. An occasional editorial comments upon the evil effects of low wages for women or upon some aspect of their position in the industrial world.[14] One of the most interesting of these is in regard to white women working for Chinese.[15] In a garment factory owned and operated by Chinese, the workmen went on strike for higher wages and the employer replaced the Chinese with white women. The labor commissioner investigated the factory and reported the conditions good. The women said they were satisfied and liked it better than working for a Caucasian "because the Chinese don't insult them." The editorial makes this comment: "The women by accepting employment from a Chinese in preference to living up to the white man's ideal proves that the question of morality is in her favor. When white folks accept work under Chinese it is because wages and conditions are as good or better than elsewhere. But there is little question of morality involved in the matter of white women and Chinese bosses. It is a case of 'root hog or die,' and if the women are not resigned to die (which we can hardly expect) they must 'root hog' or get married, and take the chances of dying anyway."

This is the last item for six years which discusses the working woman. The enthusiasm of 1888 died out gradually during the following two years. From the tone of the articles upon the question of women's work, we judge that the women were not responsive to the effort made to organize them. Many of the editorials indicate a critical impatience against the women for their willingness to accept low wages and for their lack of appreciation of the necessity to resist the encroachment of bad conditions. Then for six years, from 1894 to 1900, the records of trade-unionism in San Francisco are silent about women in industry. With 1900 began that revived interest which led to definite organization among women.

[14] *Coast Seamen's Journal*, October 29, 1890; March 25, 1891; April 1, 1891; November 4, 1891; April 11, 1894.

[15] *Coast Seamen's Journal*, August 14, 1895.

STEAM LAUNDRY WORKERS, LOCAL, NO. 26[1]

Concrete examples are rare of what women workers would demand if able to enforce their own wishes as to the conditions under which they labor. An excellent illustration is found in the case of the Steam Laundry Workers of San Francisco, for this union is so powerful that it is able to insist on the closed shop in every steam laundry in the city. Since the industry is local in character, it is removed from any extensive or serious competition with plants in other communities, and, accordingly, lends itself more readily to the development of distinctively local conditions. Freed from dangerous outside competition, an important rival to labor is removed also, making it possible for the steam laundry workers to aim directly at the desired goal without fear of destroying the industry by subjecting it to terms which might give outside competitors an advantage. The fact, moreover, that the supply of competent women seeking laundry work is limited in San Francisco has been one of the large determining factors in the growth and success of the union.

Much change has characterized the development of this industry since its earlier days. The Chinese, who had already identified themselves with laundry work in California, supplied the first workmen. The methods of Chinese laborers proved unsatisfactory in the steam laundries because the difference in language proved a barrier to any understanding between the white employer and his Oriental employees, and consequently it was found impossible to enforce any conformity to business system upon them. For these reasons, white people were engaged about twenty-five years ago to take the place of the Chinese. The conditions surrounding the employment of these first white workers were among those survivals from the eighteenth century

[1] The facts about this union were obtained from Mrs. Hannah Nolan who, as Hannah Mahony, first organized the women; from Mr. Paul Scharrenberg, secretary of the State Federation of Labor; from Charles Hawley, business agent for the union; and from the secretary, Miss Carrie Parmer, to whom my special gratitude is due for her generous interest and assistance. Employers also have been interviewed, and the steam laundries visited.

which still linger incongruously in our modern industrial organization. The "living-in" system was the order, each laundry providing board and lodging for its employees. The dormitories were wretched places with four beds in each small room. The food was poor and scanty, and even though the girls worked till midnight or after, no food was allowed after the evening meal at six o'clock. Half an hour only was allowed at noon for lunch. Early in the morning, the women were routed out in no gentle manner and by six o'clock the unwholesome breakfast was over and everyone hard at work.

These conditions remained unchanged until 1900, when a movement began for altering the old industrial regime in the laundries. During the summer of 1900 the state labor commissioner and some of the daily papers in San Francisco received a number of written complaints about conditions in the laundries. Many of the letters were anonymous, the writers stating that they feared they would lose their places if their names became known.[2] One of the papers became sufficiently interested to send a reporter to obtain employment in a laundry with the purpose of investigating the truth of the complaints. Ample ground for championing the cause of the girls was soon found. An old city ordinance prohibited work in laundries after ten o'clock at night, but the regulation was neither regarded by the proprietors nor enforced by the police. In all the establishments the girls worked long, irregular hours, frequently being detained until midnight, and sometimes until two o'clock in the morning. The investigator reported that the girls were physically depleted from their hard work and poor nourishment. Their hands were "blistered and puffed, their feet swollen, calloused and sore."[3] One of the girls said, "Many a time I've been so tired that I hadn't the courage to take my clothes off. I've thrown myself on the bed and slept like dead until I got so cold and cramped that at two or three in the morning I'd rouse up and undress and crawl into bed—only to crawl out again at half past five."[4]

[2] *San Francisco Examiner*, August 19, 1900.
[3] *San Francisco Examiner*, August 19, 1900.
[4] *San Francisco Examiner*, August 20, 1900.

Wages were $8 and $10 a month for the girls who boarded in the laundry. Women who lived at home were paid slightly more, receiving $10 to $25 a month, but the wages of the majority of these women, many of whom were widows with children to support, did not exceed $17.50 a month.[5]

The publicity given to these hard conditions and the evidence collected to prove their reality led to action on the part of the supervisors. A new ordinance was submitted to that body proposing to prohibit work in laundries after seven o'clock at night or on Sundays, making a reduction of the working hours from sixteen to thirteen daily. Trade unions, women's clubs, and private citizens sent petitions to the supervisors urging the new ordinance.[6] The state labor commissioner spoke in favor of the amendment and explained the grounds upon which it should stand in the courts. Such action as could be taken in this matter had to be based upon "the consideration of public safety and repose."

> "The old ordinance as it stands," said Commissioner Meyers, "limiting the hours of labor in laundries within the time between 6 A. M. and 10 P. M. has been upheld as a proper police regulation by the courts for the reason that there is danger of fire by night in the laundries, which is a menace to public safety, and because of the noise and confusion due to the continuance of work after dark. Now, if the ten o'clock limitation is held to be not unreasonable as the point of time when the menace to public safety begins, there is no reason why it should not be fixed, in the discretion of the legislative body, at earlier hours. The Supreme Court allows a wide latitude in the matter of reasonable police regulation, and there appears to be no reason why seven o'clock should not come within the rule of the court."[7]

When the ordinance was under discussion there was no opposition to its adoption on behalf of the employers in the steam laundries. One proprietor of a French laundry spoke in favor of the reform. "In some French laundries," he reported, "I know young French girls get up at five o'clock in the morning to go to work and work till ten o'clock at night." The two hun-

[5] Mrs. Hannah Nolan, and others who worked in the laundries at this time, gave this wage scale. *San Francisco Examiner*, August 19, 1900; August 20, 1900.

[6] *San Francisco Examiner*, August 28, 1900.

[7] *San Francisco Examiner*, August 29, 1900.

dred Chinese laundries sent an attorney to protest against the restriction of the hours of labor.[8]

The new ordinance passed finally and became effective September 18, 1900.[9] The chief of police at once sent out notices calling for strict enforcement, but inside of three days one of the supervisors called to say that the clause prohibiting work on Sundays had not been intended and was to be eliminated at the next meeting of the supervisors. The ground for the repeal was that the Superior Court had twice decided that such a law was unconstitutional. Sunday closing in laundries was, accordingly, not enforced. "The law has never been tested beyond the Superior Court," said the chief, "I believe personally that such a law could be sustained, but while the Superior Court decision is undisturbed, we can only abide by it."[10]

It soon became evident also, that, while the employers had not come out in open hostility to the new ordinance, they did not intend to obey it if they could evade the watchfulness of the police. On October 5, 1900, a committee from the laundry girls called at a newspaper office and stated that many of the laundries were still working their help until eight and nine o'clock at night.[11] The girls were preparing to petition the supervisors to compel the employers to observe the working-day of twelve hours, from seven in the morning until seven at night.

At this time some of the bolder girls spoke in favor of forming a union, but the first definite move in this direction was made by the men about two months later, when the three hundred men employed in the laundry industry organized and applied for a charter to the Laundry Workers' International Union. The men did not wish to include women in their "local," but the international body refused to grant the charter unless the women workers were included in the organization with the men. The women workers when approached were found to be timid and hesitant about joining, for the employers had heard that a movement toward unionizing was afoot and threatened the girls with dismissal if they took part in the agitation. Finally one of the

[8] *Ibid.*
[9] *San Francisco Examiner*, September 19, 1900.
[10] *San Francisco Examiner*, September 22, 1900.
[11] *San Francisco Examiner*, October 6, 1900.

girls was enlisted as an organizer. The movement was carried on secretly until, after sixteen weeks, the majority of the employees in every laundry had affiliated with the union. Not until the organization had a large and substantial membership did the workers declare themselves and come out with a formal demand for shorter hours and higher wages, together with a change of system.

So unanimous, so overwhelming, was the revolt that the employers could not help being impressed with the futility of resisting a change. The attitude and support of the newspapers proved a great help to the union at this critical time. The early members of the union feel that the publicity previously given to laundry conditions and the consequent sympathy that had been aroused for the girls was the large, determining influence which decided the employers to accede to the union's demands, since they could not afford to antagonize the public upon whom they were dependent for business.

By April 1, 1901, the conditions in the laundry industry were effectually revolutionized. The boarding system was abolished, wages were substantially increased and the working-day was shortened: girls who had been receiving $8 and $10 a month were now paid $6 and $10 a week; ten hours was declared to constitute the working-day and nine holidays a year were allowed. For overtime the employees were to be paid at the rate of time and a half. An hour was to be taken at noon and any worker violating this rule was to be fined. The fine was devised as an educative reminder of the new obligation the laborers were under to protect each other and to raise the standard of the industry upon which they must depend for a living, so fearful was the union that old conditions might creep insidiously back upon workers unaccustomed to independence.

The union worked quietly under the first agreement for two years, although during this time the leaders were carefully watching to see when the adjustment to the new order should be sufficiently complete to justify them in taking another step. In 1903 the nine-hour day was demanded. A sharp quarrel over the question took place among the proprietors. Some of the employers were ready to let the workers strike, but others felt

that the loss to the business would be too severe, believing the chances of winning against the union were too slight to justify resistance. Because the owners could not agree to any concerted action among themselves, the union gained its point without much difficulty, and the nine-hour working-day was instituted.

No other event disturbed the even history of the Steam Laundry Workers' Union for three years; then, in April, 1906, came the great earthquake and fire which rendered the majority of its 1,700 members homeless. New and unaccustomed duties were imposed upon the leaders if the standard attained was to be preserved and the union be in readiness to meet the future. The building in which the union had had its office was burned. Twenty of the twenty-nine steam laundries were destroyed. With surprising promptness reorganization of the steam laundry workers was begun. All the camps and breadlines were visited, and the members who could be located were requested to register at the home of the secretary. Just one week after the disaster a meeting was held in a laundry which was located outside the burned district, and plans were made for securing new headquarters for the union. In these new headquarters, a relief station was opened where all members were supplied with clothing and shoes. About $1,000 were spent in this way. By the end of another week, the nine laundries that had escaped destruction resumed operations, giving employment to about 900 members of the union. They worked under the terms of the agreement which had gone into effect just previous to the fire.

During the following year nine new shops were completed, but the eighteen laundries worked under pressure to supply the demand for their services and the laundry business prospered. In such circumstances the leaders of the union recognized an auspicious opportunity for attempting to gain at once the conditions which, hitherto, they had been slowly evolving. When the new annual agreement was drawn up in April, 1907, the eight-hour day was demanded, together with a slight increase in wages. The proprietors refused to sign under these new terms, declaring the business would be wrecked by such exactions. The union held to its position and 1,100 members employed in fourteen laundries went out on strike. Four laundries, employing about

two hundred hands, signed the agreement and continued to work. Aside from these four laundries none of the establishments attempted to do any business during the eleven weeks the strike lasted. One hotel tried to keep its own laundry running by the employment of non-union girls, bringing them to work in closed carriages. The union promptly induced the hackmen to refuse to carry the strike-breakers. The new workers themselves were approached and most of them were persuaded to join the union. To help the hotel, to which fresh linen was such a necessity, the proprietors of the custom laundries came once a week and laundered enough linen to supply the house. No other work was done. Relief could not be sought in Oakland, across the bay, for the trouble spread immediately to that city, and the San Francisco union aided the Oakland strikers with frequent contributions.

With so many obligations in the way of benefits and other expenses incidental to supporting a strike, the union's treasury was soon depleted. When the trouble began the union had $4,910.40 in the treasury. During the first two weeks no strike benefits were granted, as nearly all the workers had one week's pay intact. After this, $5 a week was paid to each member as long as the funds permitted, after which the unemployed strikers were given $3, $2.50, and $2 a week, according to the funds on hand. A 10 per cent assessment was levied on all members who were working, to be applied as benefits. From donations and from the proceeds of various entertainments given to aid the cause, $19,300 were received. This amount was practically all spent by the end of eleven weeks, when no settlement was in sight.

At this time, May 23, 1907, the conciliation committee of the Labor Council intervened. Several conferences had already been held between the proprietors and the committee representing the union, without resulting in any agreement. After a week of meetings and conferences the conciliation board submitted the proposition that the union should go to work on the basis of fifty-one hours a week, with a sliding scale reaching the eight-hour day at the end of three years. This agreement was accepted and all the laundries resumed operations June 17, 1907. It was found

that in the interval of the strike business had dropped off about a third and this occasioned some temporary unemployment, but gradually conditions righted themselves.

The eight-hour day in steam laundries has been in force since April, 1910, the working hours of each day being counted consecutively. When the shorter day became effective, the members were prohibited from working more than one hour overtime and the fine was continued against anyone disregarding the rule about the full noon hour. No girl was permitted to begin work before seven in the morning. All time after five o'clock was counted as overtime and paid at the time-and-a-half rate.[12]

In addition to the reduction and regulation of working hours, the union has witnessed an increase of about thirty per cent in wages since the organization in 1901. The following is the minimum scale now in effect:

STEAM LAUNDRY WAGE SCALE

	PER WEEK
Head Markers and Distributors shall receive at the rate of	$22.50
Markers and Distributors shall receive at the rate of	18.00
Head Washer shall receive at the rate of	22.50
Washer shall receive at the rate of	18.00
Helpers in Wash House shall receive at the rate of	15.00
Head Wringerman shall receive at the rate of	18.00
Wringerman shall receive at the rate of	16.50
Distributors on plain work in Mangle Room shall receive at the rate of	18.00
Shirt Finishers shall receive not less than	15.00
Tiler Ironer shall receive not less than	15.00
Fluters shall receive not less than	10.00
Ironers, first six months shall receive not less than	9.00

[12] When the state law limiting the working hours of women to eight a day went into effect on May 1, 1911, the employers felt they should be released from paying any overtime rate. The union took the contrary view, that work performed at inconvenient hours should receive a higher compensation than labor falling within the customary working-day. Otherwise, the employer would be free to operate his laundry all night without paying extra to the workers who were reversing the natural order of life; or, he might put on a shift in the late afternoon, thus requiring the girls to go home from their work at disagreeable hours. The discussion over the question lasted for several months. Finally the decision was reached that the employer should pay the overtime rate after five o'clock in the afternoon, with the exception of Monday, when the higher rate was not to be exacted until after six o'clock. This distinction was made because work is generally delayed in starting on Monday morning by a necessary wait for the bundles to be brought in by the drivers, scarcely any linen being left over from Saturday.

Ironers, six to twelve months, shall receive not less than	10.00
Ironers, over twelve months, shall receive not less than	11.00
Jumbo Ironers shall receive not less than	11.00
Polishers shall receive not less than	13.50
Shirt Press Operators shall receive not less than	13.50
Shirt Hand on Neck Band shall receive not less than	8.00
Wrist Band Machine shall receive not less than	8.00
Yoke Machine or Tiler on Yokes shall receive not less than	8.00
Sleeve Machine Hands shall receive not less than	8.00
Shirt Body Ironer shall receive not less than	10.00
Starch Body Ironer shall receive not less than	10.00
Flannel Body Ironer shall receive not less than	10.00
Shirt Waist Machine Hands shall receive not less than	9.00
Head Collar Ironers shall receive not less than	10.00
Collar Ironers shall receive not less than	8.00
Seamstress shall receive not less than	9.00
Head Starcher shall receive not less than	15.00
Starcher on Ladies' Work shall receive not less than	10.00
Shirt Dippers shall receive not less than	9.00
Shirt Rubbers, Auto. Dry-House shall receive not less than	9.00
Shirt Rubbers shall receive not less than	9.00
Shirt Rubbers on Shirt Starching Machine shall receive not less than	9.00
Collar Rubbers, Auto. Dry-House shall receive not less than	9.00
Collar Rubbers shall receive not less than	9.00
Head Mangle Girls shall receive not less than	8.50
Mangle Girls shall receive not less than	8.00
Tiers on Plain Work in Mangle Room shall receive not less than	10.00
Shaker on Mangle shall receive not less than	7.00
Operator on Tumbler shall receive not less than	10.00
Dampeners on All Work shall receive not less than	9.50
Shirt Folders shall receive not less than	8.50
Head Dry-House Hands, Male or Female shall receive not less than	10.00
Dry-House Hands, Male or Female shall receive not less than	10.00

Most of the workers receive more than the minimum wage, it being an unwritten law in the union that no one shall work at the lowest rate after some degree of skill has been attained.

Two grades of apprentices are distinguished by the class of work they are learning and are paid accordingly. Markers, distributors, washers, and wringers are known as Branch No. 1. All others are classed as Branch No. 2. No apprentice in Branch No. 1 is allowed to work in Branch No. 2. In the first agreement in 1901, apprentices in the mangle-room and shaking-room and on the simpler machines served in this capacity for a period of six months, but now the term is reduced to six days, after which

they must receive the full wage. The apprenticeship term in Branch No. 1 has been limited to a year instead of the year and a half formerly required. Apprentices in Branch No. 2 receive not less than $7 a week. In Branch No. 1 the wages are graded as follows:

First three months	$9.00 a week
Three to nine months	12.00 a week
Nine to twelve months	15.00 a week

Apprentices may not be employed in place of journeymen workers. To prevent any danger of such substitution of the cheaper labor for the more highly paid, the number of apprentices is limited in Branch No. 1. To every six journeymen in each laundry, one apprentice is allowed in the washing, marking, and distributing rooms. There has never been any trouble in keeping down the number of apprentices, owing to the short term of only six days in Branch No. 2 and to the fact that it is not economical to employ unskilled workers in Branch No. 1, where the deftness and judgment gained from experience is required.

To gain a clearer understanding of the wage scale, some explanation of the nature of the work involved is necessary. In general the union states that it bases the rate upon the responsibility thrown upon the worker.

The work of the markers and distributors requires intelligence and speed. When the bundles are received in the laundry they are first passed into the hands of the marker, who places the identification sign upon each unmarked garment. Machines have been invented to do this, but, where tried, they proved slower than the hand method and are not now used in San Francisco. After the articles have been properly marked, they are sorted according to kind by the same workers and are sent on to the washing-room. When the linen is ready for its final distribution, just before leaving the laundry, it comes into the hands of the distributors. The same people who did the initial marking and sorting generally act also as distributors. In its system the practice of the workers resembles that in the interior of a post-office. To each customer is assigned a large pigeonhole, bearing his identifying mark. Into this compartment the articles belong-

ing to him are placed. Speed and accuracy in this final sorting are of utmost importance, since promptness of delivery is involved, and since the distributors must be responsible for making sure that each customer has returned to him all the articles he sent to the laundry. Coupled with this is the unpleasantness of handling soiled linen preparatory to its washing. For work of this nature the highest wage is paid. Very few hands receive merely the minimum of $18 or $22.50, the average earning being more nearly $25 a week. Men are employed at this work almost exclusively. In the entire laundry industry in San Francisco only ten women are found in this department, and they distribute. They receive the same wages as the men, one of the articles in the agreement expressly stipulating that "women markers and distributors must be paid the rate of wages paid for men employed at the same work." The men do not look with favor upon women entering this branch and manage to keep it under their own control; the ground for the disfavor is not that of unsuitability, for the women have proved as efficient as the men, but merely that the work is highly paid and the men wish to retain the positions.[13]

After leaving the sorting department the linen is conveyed on trucks to the washing machines. These machines are huge cylinders connected with drains beneath. The amount of water used in washing must be carefully regulated or the result of the process is not satisfactory. If too little water is allowed the linen will not be clear and clean; if too much water is allowed the machine, as it revolves, throws the excess out on the floor. The business agent of the union says that the workers themselves are thus often responsible for the superfluous dampness of the floor, as the drainage is excellent in all but two or three of the steam laundries.

From the washing machines the wet, steaming garments are conveyed on trucks to the extractors. These resemble huge metal bowls set on a central stem. The linen is carefully dis-

[13] Miss Elizabeth Butler, in the *Pittsburgh Survey*, volume on "Women in the Trades," pp. 190–192, states that in the marking and distributing department of the Pittsburgh steam laundries women are rapidly superseding men, because they can be secured for a less wage, their work proving just as satisfactory.

tributed in an inner perforated basket in such a manner that the outward pressure will be equal when the machine is in motion. The rapid revolution throws the water through the perforations into the outside bowl which surrounds the basket containing the linen, the water escaping through the central stem which connects with the drain.

The work of both wringers and washers is heavy and has unhealthful features, besides calling for care and good judgment. The wage established is accordingly higher than for work which does not depend upon skill and experience for its excellence. Men operate all the washing machines and wringers, as women would be unable to do the heavy lifting required. Only one woman is employed at washing in the steam laundries in San Francisco. She washes flannels by hand in a laundry that makes a specialty of fine work. She appears to be the oldest member of the union, and has a pleasant, good-natured greeting for all who come near her. With her skirt neatly tucked up to her knees she stands on a damp floor beside the open drain which carries off the stream of suds from the machines. She bases her contented cheerfulness upon the fact that she earns almost three times as much as she could in the conventional line of taking in washing at home.

When the clothes are removed from the extractor in which they were placed when taken from the washing machines, they are found to be twisted into hard bunches and are surprisingly dry. They are next transferred to the tumbler, which is a cylindrical machine performing the operation its name indicates, for the articles are tumbled about until they are loosened and untwisted. Not all the laundries are provided with tumblers.

Flat pieces go from the tumblers to the mangles. The shakers lift the linen from the huge hampers and straighten each article with a quick shake. They then hang the linen over a pole which is conveniently placed for the girls operating the mangles. As a rule this shaking is the initial task of apprentices, and is the lowest paid labor in the laundry. Although the work is hard and monotonous, it requires no training and involves no responsibility.

Operating a mangle is also simple, requiring mechanical action on the part of the girls employed. Six-roll mangles are most commonly used. At one end the feeders push the flat articles into the machine. Each piece is carried on a conveying belt over and under the rolls and is received by other girls and folded as it comes out. The workers receiving the linen can sit at their work. It is the general custom for the girls to exchange positions at noon, those who feed in the morning receiving in the afternoon. This arrangement enables each girl to sit half the day. The union forbids its members from working on any unguarded machinery, and no record of injuries on mangles could be found, so excellently are these usually dangerous machines guarded in the San Francisco laundries; in fact the element of danger has counted for so little that the union does not reckon it as having sufficient weight to cause an increase in the proportionate wage scale.

Only flat pieces are run through the mangles; all other linen articles must be starched and dried. For starching collars and cuffs a machine is universally used. The collars and cuffs are fed into a machine with a conveying belt which carries them down through rolls buried in hot starch. These rolls rub the starch in and the linen passes on to a receiving table. Here girls rub the pieces smooth by hand and then hang them by the buttonholes on rows of hooks that move slowly on a chain across the table and through the automatic dry-house, next to which the starchers stand. The chain with its load moves so slowly that the collars and cuffs are dry when they emerge from the heated dry-house. They drop automatically into a basket.

Practically all other garments are starched by hand. Shirt-bosoms with attached cuffs must be rubbed smooth. After being starched these articles also pass through the automatic dry-house as described above.

For the dampening of shirts preparatory to ironing a machine is used which is extremely simple and effective. It consists of a good-sized box with a perforated pipe running around the inside. The dampeners lower the shirt into the box where it is sprayed from the pipes, the spray being so carefully regulated that the garment is dampened to just the right degree. The garments are then piled into a huge press, resembling an ordinary letter-

press, which quickly equalizes the moisture and makes them ready, almost immediately, for the ironers.

The ironing department is in many ways the most interesting room in a steam laundry. Old familiar methods and extremely ingenious machines are found side by side. An ordinary electric iron, increased about four times in size, is known as a jumbo iron and is used to smooth large articles, such as skirts. Naturally a jumbo iron does work more quickly than the ordinary type, since it covers more space each time it is moved, but in proportion it is also heavy and tiresome to operate, calling for speed and skillful manipulation. For the other hand processes the familiar electric iron is used.

For much of the work in the ironing department machines are used. Body ironers and sleeve ironers differ only in size. They consist of two hollow, metal rolls, the upper one heated and the lower padded and unheated. The upper roll is about seven and one-half inches in diameter and the under one slightly smaller. The length of the rolls is from twenty-two to thirty-four inches in the body ironer, but only from six to twelve inches in the sleeve ironer. The operator slips the garment over the padded roll. With her left foot she presses a treadle, lifting the lower roll up into contact with the heated metal roll. By pressing another treadle with her right foot the motion is reversed. If the pressure on the treadle is lessened, the lower roll drops; accordingly the process requires continuous, steady alertness with both hands and feet, for the pressure on the treadles must be even and the garment must be held in place and adjusted on the lower roll as each part of it is ironed. Where gas is used to heat the rolls, another feature is added to the strain of operating the body or sleeve ironing machine, for the gas fumes are so disagreeable that many girls cannot work over them without becoming ill. In more than half the laundries in San Francisco the rolls are heated by electricity.

A machine for ironing shirt-bosoms works on the same plan as the above excepting that a padded board the shape of a shirt-bosom takes the place of the lower roll. But the shirt press is now in general use. This consists of two padded boards which swing on the same pivot. The operator fastens the shirt-bosom over one board with clamps. By touching a release treadle, the

other board, which has been in contact with a flat, heated metal sheet slightly raised to the right, is swung around, while the board the girl has just prepared is lifted into contact with the metal sheet at the same time. The ironed shirt is pushed off automatically and the board is cleared for the operator to adjust another shirt, which she does while the one previously prepared is being pressed by the hot metal sheet with which it was swung into contact.

Neckband and wristband machines work on the same principle as the shirt press but differ from it in appearance. The lower padded piece is saddle-shaped and over this the neckband or wristband is fitted. By pressure on a treadle the lower piece is forced up against a heated metal surface which fits down closely over the neck and wristband. The older models of these machines required much exertion from the operator, but the newer form, in which the foot pressure is reinforced by a spiral spring, is the type generally used in San Francisco.

The machines used for ironing separate collars and cuffs are small mangles. Fastened to a table nearby are several other small machines used for shaping and trimming collars. To simplify the ironing of such fine work as shirt-waists and underwear a clever, but simple, device is employed. A number of egg-shaped, hollow, metal balls, called puffers, stand about two feet above the table on metal stems. The size of the puffers vary from that of a hen's egg to about seven inches in length. The sleeve of a shirtwaist or the gathered portion of a garment, which is difficult to iron by the usual hand process, is slipped over these balls, which smooth and shape the garment as it dries.

Looking back once more at the wage scale, we find that the rule of expecting a higher rate for the operations depending upon individual judgment and responsibility for the excellence of the work is adhered to. Shirt-body ironing is to all appearances far more exhausting than the work of a shirt press operator; but in spite of its difficulty, the former process is largely mechanical and an error in judgment would not make the difference in the quality of the work produced by the laundry that it would in the case of the shirt press.

Some comparison between wages paid where the closed shop is maintained and in other cities should be of interest, as it throws light upon the workers' view of a fair wage. We find the following scale in San Diego:[14]

Markers and distributors	$15.00 to $20.00 a week
Shirt finishers	9.00 to 12.00 a week
Ironers (piece work)	9.00 to 15.00 a week
Jumbo ironers	9.00 to 12.00 a week
Polishers (experienced)	12.00 to 15.00 a week
Polishers (less skilled)	9.00 to 10.00 a week
Shirt press operators	12.00 to 15.00 a week
Wrist-band machine	12.00 to 15.00 a week
Shirt-body ironers	9.00 a week
Shirt-waist machine	9.00 a week
Collar ironers	9.00 to 12.00 a week
Starchers	12.00 a week
Shirt and collar rubbers	9.50 a week
Head mangle girls	8.00 a week
Mangle girls	1.25 to 1.50 a day
Shakers	9.50 a week
Dampeners	9.50 a week
Shirt folders	9.00 a week
Dry-house hands	12.00 a week
Hand washers	12.00 a week

Comparing this scale with that prevailing in San Francisco we find these differences: the minimum wage in San Francisco for markers and distributors is $7.50 more a week than the San Diego minimum and $2.50 more than the highest wage paid in San Diego. Since the average pay in San Francisco is $25 a week for markers and distributors, the wage in this line actually runs from $5 to $10 more in San Francisco.

Shirt finishers receive, at the minimum, $6 a week more in San Francisco than in San Diego.

	San Francisco
Ironers receive	$3.00 more
Jumbo ironers	3.00 more
Polishers from	$1.50 to 4.50 more
Shirt press operators	1.50 more
Wrist-band machine hands	4.00 less
Shirt-body ironers	1.00 more

[14] These figures were obtained from the Laundrymen's Association and were verified at several of the leading steam laundries of San Diego.

Shirt-waist machine hands	same
Collar ironers	1.00 less
Starchers about	2.00 less
Shirt dippers	3.00 less
Shirt and collar rubbers	.50 less
Mangle girls	.50 more
Shakers	1.50 less
Dampeners	same
Shirt folders	.50 less
Dry-house hands	2.00 less

This comparison is not strictly fair, since the workers in San Francisco generally receive more than the minimum stipulated by the union's wage scale, whereas the San Diego wage list is that actually paid in the majority of the laundries. The figures, nevertheless, do show that the union's demands tend to be lower than the industry would pay even without an agreement in the less skilled branches, and to run higher in the more responsible skilled positions.

The following is the rate usual in Chicago steam laundries:[15]

Markers and distributors	$12.00 to $15.00 a week
Shirt finishers	12.00 a week
Ironers (piece work)	$1.50 to 2.00 a day
Polishers	.07 per shirt
Shirt press operators	10.00 a week
Wrist-band machine	5.00 a week
Sleeve machine hands	5.00 a week
Shirt body ironers	9.00 a week
Shirt-waist machine hands	2.00 a day
Collar ironers	8.00 a week
Starchers	8.00 a week
Shirt dippers	7.00 a week
Shirt rubbers	7.00 a week
Collar rubbers	8.00 a week
Head mangle girls	7.00 a week
Mangle girls	6.00 a week
Shakers	6.00 a week
Dampeners	8.00 a week
Shirt Folders	6.50 a week
Dry-house hands	6.00 a week
Hand washers	2.00 a day

[15] This wage scale was obtained from several of the leading steam laundries of Chicago.

On comparing Chicago with San Francisco we get this result:

	San Francisco
Markers and distributors receive	$10.50 more
Shirt finishers	3.00 more
Ironers	2.00 more
Shirt press operators	3.50 more
Wrist-band machine hands	3.00 more
Sleeve machine hands	3.00 more
Shirt body ironers	1.00 more
Shirt-waist machine hands	3.00 less
Collar ironers	same
Starchers	2.00 more
Shirt dippers	2.00 more
Shirt rubbers	1.00 more
Head mangle girls	1.50 more
Mangle girls	2.00 more
Shakers	1.00 more
Dampeners	1.50 more
Shirt folders	2.00 more
Dry-house hands	4.00 more

The New York City standard rate is given by Sue Ainslie Clark and Edith Wyatt in an article in *McClure's Magazine* February, 1911:

Hand starching (shirt)	$12.00 a week
Hand ironing	10.00 a week
Hand ironing (collars)	9.00 a week
Hand washing	8.00 a week
Machine ironing	7.00 a week
Feeders	6.00 a week
Folders	6.00 a week
Catchers	5.00 a week
Machine starching (shirts)	5.00 a week
Collar ironing	5.00 a week
Machine starching (collars)	4.50 a week
Shakers	4.50 a week

The divisions are not the same as on the San Francisco list but there is basis for some comparison between New York and San Francisco.

	San Francisco
Ironers receive	$1.00 to $2.00 more
Hand washers	10.00 more
Machine ironers	1.00 to 6.00 more
Feeders and catchers	2.00 to 3.00 more
Folders	2.50 more
Starchers	3.00 to 5.00 more
Shakers	2.50 more

Elizabeth Butler, in the Pittsburgh Survey volume on *Women and the Trades*, gives the wages paid in that city:[16]

Head mangle girls	$5.50	$6.00	$8.00	.....	.....
Shakers, feeders, folders	3.00	3.50	4.00	$5.00	.....
Head starchers	8.00	9.00	.....	.....	.....
Starchers	3.00	3.50	4.00	5.00	$6.00
Women checkers and sorters	8.00	9.00	10.00	12.00	16.00
Men checkers and sorters	12.00	15.00	18.00	20.00	21.00
Roll machine ironers	6.00	7.00	8.00	.....	.....
Press machine ironers	6.50	7.00	8.00	9.00	.....
All others	4.50	5.50	6.50	7.00	.....

(For long service a few ironers receive $8.00.)

Here we find that the highest wage paid falls conspicuously short of the minimum union wage in San Francisco.

	San Francisco
Head mangle girls receive	$0.50 to $3.00 more
Shakers, feeders, and folders	3.00 to 5.00 more
Head starchers	6.00 to 7.00 more
Starchers	4.00 to 7.00 more
Women checkers and sorters	2.00 to 10.00 more
Roll machine ironers	2.00 to 4.00 more
Press machine ironers	4.50 to 7.00 more
Ironers	4.00 to 6.50 more

The statistics of the Massachusetts Department of Labor for 1910 give a little information about typical steam laundry wages in that state:[17]

Plain ironers	$8.10 a week
Starch ironers	9.60 a week
Polishers	12.00 a week
Washers	12.00 a week

This means that ironers in San Francisco are paid from $1.40 to $2.90 a week more than in Massachusetts; polishers get $1.50 more; washers receive from $3 to $6 more.

The Pittsburgh comparison also calls our attention to the influence the Steam Laundry Workers' Union has had in keeping the rate of pay the same for women as for men. In Pittsburgh, women checkers and sorters, known as markers and distributors

[16] Elizabeth Butler, *Women and The Trades*, pp. 394–396, 400–401.

[17] *Report of Statistics of Labor*, Mass., 1910, p. 20.

in San Francisco, are paid from $4 to $8 a week less than men receive, and according to Miss Butler's report are rapidly displacing the men on this account, their work proving even more satisfactory. In San Francisco the union insists that women be paid the same as men for the same work, and the men hold these positions.

As to working hours, according to the same authorities quoted above, it is not uncommon for the New York laundries to run from seven in the morning until eleven or twelve o'clock at night without granting any overtime pay. In Massachusetts the nine-hour day is the rule. In Pittsburgh the hours are long and irregular. The law in Pennsylvania places the limit of working hours for women at sixty per week, and not to exceed twelve hours in any one day, but in the laundries this rule is not obeyed. The usual week is given at sixty-one and one-half hours, with overtime running to sixty-six hours. A short-ironer reported working until 1:30 A.M., and several owners admitted keeping open until midnight.[18] Even before the eight-hour day was a matter of law in California, the union had succeeded in enforcing that regulation in San Francisco.

Sanitary conditions in San Francisco laundries are excellent, but this is also true of the larger and newer plants in all cities. San Francisco doubtless has a smaller proportion of the old crowded shops than are found elsewhere, because practically all the laundries in San Francisco have been newly built since the earthquake and fire of April, 1906, which demolished the old plants. Only three of the thirty-two steam laundries can be criticised for steam, dampness and poor ventilation. The most improved machinery is universal, for it is of recent purchase also. The union does not permit its members to work at unguarded machinery, hence accidents are rare, and for such as occur the union considers the workers responsible because of taking some unnecessary or unjustifiable risk. In this matter the attitude of the union members is interesting, inasmuch as it shows no disposition on their part to blame the employer or the industry. With the well-guarded machinery accidents are so insignificant and so slight, according to the workers themselves,

[18] Elizabeth Butler, *Women and The Trades*, p. 351.

that when called upon to give some information about the nature of the injuries they could not recall the occurence of anything more serious than a slight burn in the ironing-room.

The proprietors themselves take great pride in the condition of their shops and have always shown themselves willing to co-operate readily in any suggestion the union has made for the improved comfort of the workers. Such suggestions have always been slight and infrequent and are made through the business agent of the union.

Laundries are found in but two hotels, the two largest in the city. In one the laundry is located on the top floor. It is airy and well lighted, the large windows commanding a panoramic view of the bay, the hills, the mountains and the city. This laundry does work for the hotel guests as well as the linen for the establishment. A higher price is charged, but the hotel laundry gives finer service; in fact, its work is the best in the city. This laundry pays the highest wages in San Francisco and will employ only the most skilled hands. Here, for instance, the mangle girls receive $12 instead of the minimum of $8 a week, and the shirt-press operator is paid $16 to $18 instead of the minimum $13.50. The girls were never required to work overtime here, even before the eight-hour law became effective.

In the other hotel the laundry is in the basement and is artificially lighted. It occupies three times as much space as the one just described, and the washrooms, starching, and drying-rooms are partitioned from each other. More money has been expended to make this laundry comfortable than in any other in the city and an extensive ventilating system has been installed. Over every machine is a hood which carries off the steam and fumes and near each worker is a ventilator. Streams of air flow in from these ventilators, but even so the disadvantages of the location are not to be overcome and the air is close and dead. The hotel is making preparations to move its laundry to the top floor. To the observer, this shop would appear to be one of the most undesirable in the city, and it is surprising, therefore, to find that the workers like the shop, remain employed here a long time, and, if they change, seek to come back. The president of the union works here as a checker and sorter. The wage paid to the hands

is substantially above the minimum. From conversations with the workers it became evident that this laundry, most undesirable in location, close, hot, artificially lighted, seems to have induced a spirit of loyalty among its employees, because the proprietors have been so ready to install whatever improvements promised to better the shop.

Actual working conditions alone seem to be the only ones in which the union concerns itself. Lunch-rooms, rest-rooms, and provisions for noon-hour recreation do not appeal to the union leaders as a necessity. In only one steam laundry has a rest and lunch-room been provided. This is in the plant belonging to what is known as the "Laundry Trust." This plant provides a comfortable room for the girls and employs a matron. A gas stove, tables, dishes, and cooking utensils are furnished, and the girls may prepare their own lunches here if they desire. The workers themselves do not express any special desire for such conveniences. Most of the girls said they preferred to spend the time during the noon hour outside the laundry. Many of them buy their lunch; those who carry their food from home go out of doors to eat, a desirable way to spend an hour, and one made practicable most of the time by the San Francisco climate. Hot water is always available and in every laundry there are some arrangements that can be utilized for cooking. This makes a warm meal possible for every worker, and it is customary for several girls to join together and have tea, coffee, hot stew, or some other warm dish.

As to hours, wages, and shop conditions in general, the union says that it has attained all it desires and is satisfied. The proprietors, on the other hand, are not so well satisfied. They complain that they are unable to make money and blame the union wage and hours for this. Several of the leading laundries gave as another reason that San Francisco did not seem to demand so many clean clothes as other cities. Several superintendents who had been identified with the laundry business in other parts of the country spoke of the fact that there was a noticeable difference in the amount of linen sent to steam laundries from each family in San Francisco as compared with other cities. They were inclined to believe that high prices prevented people from

utilizing the steam laundries.[19] They admit that it is more expensive to have work done at the laundry than at home, but declare that they cannot lower their prices and thus increase the volume of their business, because the price is not sufficient now to make the work as profitable as it is in other communities.

In the matter of prices, we find that the charge in San Diego is the same as in San Francisco, excepting for collars, which cost three cents for laundering instead of two and one-half cents in the former city.[20] The laundries of both Pasadena and Los Angeles serve a large tourist trade, which usually wants work done quickly and under the circumstances is not apt to consider price. Two lists are shown in these laundries. On the one apparently intended for transient customers the prices run noticeably higher than on the regular list for permanent customers. On the former a difference of from five to twelve cents a dozen appears in household linen over the San Francisco charge, and the cost for garments is slightly more. On the family list the charge is about the same as in San Francisco. In Sacramento the prices for women's garments and for household linen are listed slightly lower than in San Francisco, but the list for men's linen is the same.

In New York City household linen in quantities costs the same as in San Francisco, but runs considerably higher for individual pieces. For wearing apparel, the New York price closely approximates the San Francisco charge. Massachusetts presents a variation according to the locality. In Brookline the prices are in excess of those charged by the San Francisco laundries which make a specialty of finer work, running from two to ten cents more on half the list, and being the same on the remainder. In a typical Cambridge laundry, garments are done for from half a cent to five cents less per article than in San Francisco, but household linen is slightly higher.

Prices in Chicago are lower; women's garments cost from two to fifteen cents less per article; household linen from four to

[19] It should be noted that San Francisco is not a manufacturing city and that it does not suffer from the soft-coal nuisance.

[20] The comparison of prices in this and in each of the following instances was made from the lists obtained from typical laundries in each community.

twelve and a half cents less on the dozen; men's clothing costs the same as in San Francisco for half the articles, but is listed cheaper by from half a cent to five cents per article on the other half.

Pittsburgh shows a decidedly less charge than San Francisco for household linen and women's garments; the former costs at a rate of from six to fourteen cents less on the dozen; women's wear runs from three to twelve cents less per garment. Over half the men's list is the same, but the remainder costs from two to two and a half cents less in Pittsburgh.

The San Francisco prices are eight per cent below the estimate the proprietors make of those necessary to afford reasonable profit under union conditions. This extra amount they say they cannot charge and hold any trade, because of competition, particularly that of the French and Japanese laundries.

The French laundries do not work under union conditions, but an effort which is being made to unionize the employees is meeting with some indication of success. Some years ago the French laundry workers were in an organization of their own, which was affiliated with the Labor Council, but they found it next to impossible to accomplish any results in changing shop conditions or enforcing their rules, because of the internal organization of the laundries themselves. Most of the workers are relatives of the proprietor and live in his family, which commonly occupies the rooms in the rear or above the laundry. With a large number of their co-workers thus identified with a family interest in the business, the other employees met only discouragement in their efforts. In April, 1901, the French laundry workers followed up the ordinance of August, 1900, which limited their work to thirteen hours a day, with a demand for the twelve-hour day.[21] They stated that in spite of the ordinance they had worked from fifteen to sixteen hours, and had ordered a reduction in time when they made out their new schedule. A large number of the French workers were locked out in consequence of this demand. In the majority of the laundries the workers finally won. The union among the French employees met with so many difficulties, however, that it finally ceased to be active. Hours

[21] *San Francisco Examiner*, April 28, 1901.

continued to be as long as the city ordinance permitted and wages to be low, not averaging more than half those paid in the steam laundries. French laundries are numerous and are strong enough to be a regulating influence in the price charged for laundry work.

An entering wedge toward bringing these foreign workers into the Steam Laundry Workers' Union was found in June, 1911. The business agent of the union noticed that the building occupied by a certain French establishment was larger than was usual. On investigation he discovered that a complete plant for a steam laundry was in operation in the rear of the small shop which was visible from the street, and in which a few girls could be seen ironing by hand. The place employed over a hundred hands. The business agent of the union found in the neighborhood a number of residents who were in sympathy with his cause, and they agreed to sign a complaint against the French laundry stating that it was a nuisance, unless the proprietor consented to unionize his shop. At the time, the city administration was in the control of men who came from trade-union membership and the proprietor evidently felt that his business was in danger, for he yielded to the demand that he make his laundry a closed shop. As soon as these employees had joined the union, they began to work among the other French laundries to induce their fellow workers to do the same. This French employer is also endeavoring to persuade the other proprietors to consent to the recognition of the union, in order that all the French laundries might be working on the same basis as to wages and conditions that he is now forced to meet.

No toleration is displayed toward the existence of Japanese laundries under any conditions.[22] Against them a thoroughly organized campaign has been carried on for some years. In 1908 a decided depression made itself felt in the laundry business, proprietors, drivers, and workers all noticing a steady decrease in the amount of custom. So seriously was the condition felt that an investigation was instituted, the conclusion of which was that the decrease in business in the steam laundries was found to be due to the rapid growth of Japanese laundries. In two years these had doubled in number and had increased their capacity.

Twenty Japanese establishments were found in the city of San Francisco in 1908. The Japanese had cut under the prices charged by the steam laundries and had secured a large trade. On the strength of these findings the "Anti-Jap Laundry League" was formed. The league is supported by the Laundry Drivers, the Steam Laundry Workers' Union, the proprietors of the steam laundries, and the French laundry owners. The Laundry Drivers contribute $100 a month, the union $100 a month, the proprietors of the steam laundries ten cents for each person employed, and the French Laundry Association $35 a month.

Fighting the Japanese laundries is conducted as a business. The league has an office and employs a secretary, a stenographer, and several outside workers. The outside workers trail the Japanese wagons, making note of the time and address of each stop, and whether the driver has picked up or delivered a bundle. Pickets are stationed outside of Japanese laundries; cards are passed out by them to the patrons; and the customers are followed to find out where they live. This information is turned over to the office, where the name of the person living at the given address is ascertained and entered upon a card. To each patron of the Japanese a series of letters is then sent, appealing to them to stop their patronage of Japanese laundries. If the letters have no effect, a personal visit is made on the customer by a woman outside worker who endeavors to persuade the housewife to promise to abandon her employment of a Japanese. The league claims that it influences about ninety per cent of those approached. To reach the general public and arouse a sentiment against the Orientals, a campaign of publicity is carried on by means of printed circulars.

Efforts are not confined to the attempt to undermine the business by taking away trade, but direct blows are also aimed at the laundries themselves. The National Laundrymen's Association Supply House has been induced to refuse to sell to the Japanese or, at least, to place a prohibitive price on all machinery desired by a Japanese. The local supply houses were dissuaded

[22] The information about the Anti-Jap Laundry League was obtained from the secretary, Mr. R. C. Hearst.

from selling soap, starch, bluing, and other necessities to Japanese in San Francisco. They are forced to obtain all of these things from Berkeley, across the bay, where one establishment makes a business of supplying them.

The league has not felt it necessary to expend much effort against the Chinese, for it is shown that Chinese laundries do not receive an extensive patronage from white customers. Not only is their rivalry for the trade felt less, but the Chinese are not so aggressive in their business tactics as are the Japanese.

The Anti-Jap Laundry League has the backing of all the labor unions, for they are all strong advocates of the exclusion of Orientals. Many of the unions forbid their members to patronize Japanese laundries, imposing a heavy fine, amounting to $50 in some cases, for doing so.

The Steam Laundry Workers' Union does not confine its activities to maintaining its strength in San Francisco alone, but has expanded its business until its office has really become a central employment bureau which supplies labor to a majority of the laundries in the smaller towns in the territory tributary to San Francisco. Recently the members of the Laundry Workers' Union in Alameda County affiliated with the San Francisco union, adding over nine hundred members to that organization. That the two unions should have coalesced is natural, for the workers in Alameda County, across the bay, frequently work in San Francisco laundries; in fact, the president of the Oakland union was employed in San Francisco.

The union declares the following to be its objects:

"To cultivate feelings of friendship among members of our class; to assist each other in securing employment; to reduce the hours of labor; to secure by legal and proper means a higher standard of wages for work performed, it is necessary to organize and unite under one banner all branches of our class.

"Therefore, we pledge ourselves to labor unitedly in behalf of the principles herein set forth; to perpetuate our order on the basis of friendship and justice; to expound its objects and work for their general adoption; to respect and obey the laws laid down for its guidance and government, and always labor for its success knowing, as we do, that when we are united no reasonable demand that we may make can be denied us.

"When organized it shall be our duty to educate ourselves on all trade and labor matters, in order to work intelligently, unitedly and in harmony with one another.

"The principal objects of the union are to protect and advance the interests of the laundry workers of San Francisco and vicinity; to secure a shorter work day; to establish a fair minimum rate of wages; to establish an employment bureau; to secure prompt payment of wages, and the practice of those virtues that elevate and adorn society and remind man of his duty to his fellow-man, to elevate his position and maintain the rights of the workingman."[22]

The membership of the union includes all nationalities and people of all ages. In securing or holding employment age makes no difference, because the older women are generally highly skilled, so that many mature women are found in the trade.

The members elect the officers of the union semi-annually, but this does not mean that officers are frequently changed. The same secretary and business agent have been re-elected for several years. Every member is required to vote on penalty of a fine, and all dues and assessments must be paid by election time. Each person must present the membership card as he or she passes in to the voting place showing a record clear from debt to the organization. One ballot is then handed to the voter. Four or five hours are required for the entire membership to vote, the large hall being crowded most of the time. The elections are attended by considerable partizanship and often occasion personal ill-will among the members. Vigorous electioneering is carried on at the polls by the candidates and their supporters. Not long since, when important positions were being sought by several members, certain shop collectors delayed sending the dues they had collected in to the central office. The action was evidently done with the intention of causing confusion and dissatisfaction at election time. A number of members found, when they presented themselves at the polls, that they had not yet been credited by the main office with dues they had paid. In the hurry and stress of the moment it was not possible to discover where the blame should rest and the irritation resulting from the situation cost the incumbent officers a number of votes.

[22] By-laws of the International Steam Laundry Workers' Union.

Internal friction is not uncommon between the men and the women over the conduct of affairs. It is not improbable, indeed it is looked upon as desirable, by outside labor officials, that the men and women should eventually separate and have distinct organizations. As it is now, the men are inclined to assume a domineering attitude, which makes it unpleasant for the women to speak freely and discourages those girls who are naturally timid from asserting their opinions. In spite of the fact that the women in the union outnumber the men almost five to one, men are always elected as delegates to the State Federation of Labor. This situation is due to the fact that the women will not stand together on a woman candidate, those in one laundry being unwilling to vote an honor to a woman working in some other laundry, each laundry group forming a clique of its own. Rather than see an honor go to another clique the women will vote for the man.

The expenses of the union are met by dues and initiation fees. Initiation fees are on a sliding basis according to the wage received. The minimum for Branch No. 2 is $5 and the maximum $25 for journey workers. Apprentices are charged a fee one-half that paid by the journey workers in their division. The minimum initiation fee for Branch No. 1 is $10 and the maximum is $50 for journey workers. Dues vary according to the earnings of the worker. Members receiving $10 a week or over pay fifty cents a month; members receiving under $10 a week pay thirty-five cents a month for dues. The chief expenses of the union are for salaries. The recording and financial secretary is paid $20 a week; the secretary has an assistant who receives $17 a week; $15 a month is paid to the treasurer; the sergeant-at-arms is paid $5 a month; the business agent receives a salary of $27 a week. The receipts of the union are so far in excess of its expenses that the union has accumulated a substantial fund and is in a prosperous financial condition.

The Steam Laundry Workers' Union seems to be firmly entrenched in its power. In addition to the fact that it would be necessary for the owners of laundries to have 2000 workers available to put in the positions at once, if they hoped to bring about the open shop, other troubles would follow, since the union,

because of its numbers and influence and because it is an example of the conditions the trade-unionist regards as his goal, would have the backing of the entire labor world. A number of the best shops in the city also are really owned by the laundry drivers, who themselves are formed into a strong union. At the time an attempt was being made to form a "laundry trust"[24] and an actual start was well on its way in that direction, the drivers became alarmed as they saw numerous laundries absorbed by the new project. The drivers were proprietors themselves, inasmuch as they own their routes, hiring the laundries to do the work they brought in, for a specified sum. In the immense plant that was being established they saw a formidable rival, for the trust proposed to hire drivers and run wagons of its own on all the routes. To meet this danger the drivers themselves started laundries to which they took the work of their customers, so that now a number of the shops are the property of groups of laundry drivers while others depend for their support upon the patronage contracted for with the drivers. This condition is a very near approach to the ownership of the industry by the laundry workers themselves, and acts as an effectual stop to any action on the part of laundry proprietors sufficiently general to break the power of the union.

The Steam Laundry Workers' Union views the present arrangement as to hours, wages, and shop conditions with satisfaction. The workers feel that a fair proportion of the result of their labor reaches them and that they have an influential voice in the ordering of the conditions of their lives. As long as the situation in San Francisco remains as it is, they say they have nothing more to ask.

[24] See page 31.

BINDERY WOMEN'S LOCAL UNION, NO. 125[1]

Bad conditions had nothing to do with the inception of the Bindery Women's Union, its first suggestion coming from a remark lightly made by the present secretary. She had been assigned to some work usually done by boys, and, as she took her place at the table, laughingly told one of the men that she was going to join his union. He took her remark seriously, talking to her as they worked side by side about the desirability of the women forming an organization. A month after this first conversation a meeting of the women employed in binderies was called in September, 1902. The majority of the 225 women engaged in the trade attended the meeting, but four-fifths of them admitted frankly that they came merely out of curiosity, and not because they were dissatisfied with their working conditions. At the September meeting, seventy-four of the girls joined. A vigorous campaign of persuasion was continued by the workers who had become interested, with the result that the union had gained a membership of 200 by November, 1902. Notification was then sent to the employers that a union had been formed, and that recognition was requested. After a week's delay, the employers consented to receive the representatives from the women. At this first consultation the employers offered no opposition to the movement; in fact, they showed themselves friendly rather than otherwise. At this time no agreement was made and no schedule of wages was presented.

The girls were working eight and one-half hours a day. They were receiving an average wage of $7 a week, working on holidays for the same rate, but receiving extra compensation for Sundays and for night work. The overtime wage was fixed by the employer. The girls who were earning from $3 to $6 a week were paid fifteen cents an hour overtime; those receiving $6 to $8, twenty cents an hour; those earning over $8 a week, twenty-five cents an hour.

[1] The secretary of the local organization of the International Bookbinder's Union, Miss Ella Wunderlich, furnished the information about this union.

While the girls had been contented with the above conditions before organizing, meeting with each other and discussing their trade seemed to have the effect of calling the workers' attention to some things they thought should be remedied. They began to feel that the union should be of some service to them. After the workers were organized, the old arrangement was left undisturbed only six months. In May, 1903, the union gave thirty days' notice that an increase of wages was desired; $8 was named as the minimum for the less skilled journey-workers, and $10 for the skilled. No scale of wages was made for apprentices, but twenty-five cents an hour was designated as overtime pay for an apprentice, an increase of ten cents an hour over the former rate. Time and a half was fixed as the overtime wage for all journey-workers. A night shift was to receive the regular rate, the overtime applying merely to hours in excess of eight and one-half. Eight holidays were demanded. On refusal of the employers to grant the increased wage, a strike was declared.

The girls gained their demands at the end of four weeks. They supported their own strike entirely while it was in progress, those who were employed paying a percentage of their wages to the union. After they went back to work the International Bookbinders' Union paid them $4 a week for the time they had lost.

The union asked for no further changes for almost three years. In January, 1906, the eight-hour day was requested. On condition that it should not become effective until June 1 this demand was conceded.

Before the six months were over the union was forced to a test which proved how much internal cohesion existed. The earthquake and fire came in April of that year, and every bindery in San Francisco was destroyed. In less than a week, Willie Smalzon, a member of the men's union, whose home was outside the burned district, placed a placard on his fence asking the members to come and register. With this as a starting point, reorganization began anew. After a meeting of the executive committee which was held in Oakland on April 30, 1906, a notice was published in the papers calling a meeting of both the men and women in Twin Peaks Hall, San Francisco. The men's

union and the women's union continued to hold joint meetings until November. At the time of the fire the Bindery Women's Union lost about thirty members, most of whom have never been heard of since. After six months all who had not reappeared were voted withdrawal cards in order that their record might stand clear on the books of the union.

Work was extremely plentiful. As soon as the printing and binding shops could find shelter they ran night and day in order to fill the immense demands they had to meet. Three shifts of labor were kept busy, from eight o'clock in the morning until four in the afternoon; from four in the afternoon until midnight; from midnight until eight in the morning. When the first of June brought the date agreed upon for the shorter day to go into effect, there was a little friction about granting the eight hours, but no serious difficulty arose. The employers were in no position to risk trouble when forced to meet immediately such an influx of business. Although the union had not requested the overtime rate for night work, the employers voluntarily paid a bonus to the shift employed from midnight until eight o'clock in the morning.

A year later the prosperity of the employers reflected itself in a wish on the part of the girls to share more largely in the profits of the industry. In April, 1907, a new scale was submitted which fixed $10 a week as the minimum wage for any journey-worker. When this new agreement was proposed, the question of apprentices was taken up for the first time. An apprentice wage scale of $4 a week with a fifty-cent increase for every six months of service was established. A three-year term of apprenticeship was named. A clause limiting the number of apprentices was also included, but this was waived on condition that apprentices should be given to understand when engaged for work that they were expected to come under the jurisdiction of the union. This new agreement was settled without any trouble and is still in force after almost five years.

The continuation of the arrangement is an indication of contentment with existing conditions on the part of the bindery workers; for the union has no definite time for submitting agreements, the old one holding over until some new situation arises

which requires adjustment. The employers have expressed a desire for an understanding that schedules shall stand for three years in order that they may be certain of their arrangements with employees for a definite time. Most of the women's unions believe in agreements lasting for a definite stated interval, but the Bindery Women's Union prefers the method of indefiniteness because it leaves the workers free to make new demands when occasion arises without deferring action until the expiration of the old contract.

While $10 a week is the established minimum wage, more than half the women are paid a larger sum than this, $11 to $12 being usual, while forewomen receive $14, $15, to $18 a week. It seems a little strange, therefore, that the employers should consider the minimum too high, claiming that some of the girls are not worth that much. To this the union replies that it will not lower its standard; if a girl is not worth $10 the employer may discharge her, for the union does not interfere in case of dismissal. A girl is expected by the union to be efficient enough to earn $10 a week if she remains in the trade at all.

The union has fostered the industrial idea in organization because it has found that this system serves the ends of the women much better than craft organization. The San Francisco shops handle every type of work and the girls fill in on all branches. This enables the girls to keep steadily employed even during a dull season, for they can be used in any department. In other parts of the country, the women are most frequently found in a craft union, such as "Book Cover Stampers," "Collators and Folders." The San Francisco union believes that this breaking up of the workers into small groups confined to one branch of the trade weakens the power of an organization because the women are distributed in their interests. It also gives ground for jurisdictional disputes. Another result is a narrow specialization which hinders the efficiency of the worker for the trade as a whole.[2]

The women are occupied with the simpler branches of binding, being shifted from one table to another as they may be needed. A woman runs the sewing machine and also the stitching machine

[2] The secretary of the Bindery Women's Union, Miss Ella Wunderlich, points out this difference.

which is used for wiring pages together. The folding machine is attended by a woman whose duty it is to sit beside the machine and watch if anything goes wrong. If a sheet tears or is crumpled in passing through the folder, she can tell by the sound and stops the machine, removing the spoiled sheet. Punching machines and perforating machines are run by women, but these are not in constant use.

Girls seated in a long row at a table sew the folded sheets of the books together. The big needle used for the work is threaded through the end of a cord which is strung up through a bar raised horizontally above the table. Hand sewing is generally in use because it is more firm and more satisfactory than machine work.

Near the sewing table are other tables piled with the sheets ready to be gathered into a book. The women walk around the table, taking one sheet from each pile. When the collator completes a book she places her initials on it, so that if a mistake is made in arrangement, it will be possible to tell whose fault it is. No penalty is attached for making a mistake, nothing being done unless errors become numerous. The initial-placing system seems to be a sufficient corrective in itself to prevent carelessness, for noticeable inefficiency would soon make itself known. Indexing machines are operated by girls. The ruling machine is run by men, the girls feeding the sheets into the machine. Young apprentice girls usually paste the leather title-pieces on the backs of books, the lettering being done afterwards by men.

In a word, it might be said as a general division, that all the preparatory processes are in the hands of the women and all the finishing in the hands of the men. Jurisdictional disputes arise between the men and women on this point; sometimes the employer wants to put women at work which is regarded as coming under the province of the men's union; sometimes the men feel that certain work should fall to their hands, as in the case of the folding machines, which were won by the women only after a dispute lasting two years.

The union itself forbids the girls from doing bronzing. This consists of rubbing a gilt powder into the damp covers of catalogues, pamphlets, programs, etc. The work is very disagreeable,

injurious to eyes, nose, throat, and hands. Bronzing machines have been invented which do away with this danger, so the girls feel justified in refusing to do the work by hand. At present bronzing is done by the men.

As a basis of comparison as to hours and wages elsewhere, we find a little information in the New York State Department of Labor Report for 1908.[3] In New York City, women gold-layers, that is those engaged in pasting the gold-leaf on the backs of books preparatory to the letter stamping, receive $10 a week for an eight-hour day. Collators get $8 a week for an eight-hour day. We see that the hours and wages are about the same in both cities. Although collators in San Francisco receive $10 a week, they are few in number and often are apprentices, so the wage in this branch would probably prove to be on the same basis as the New York wage. Fully half the women in San Francisco binderies receive a higher wage than the required minimum, so as a matter of fact wages in San Francisco may show a higher average than the New York schedule, but we do not have sufficient data to prove the assumption. Miss Elizabeth Butler in her book *Women and the Trades* states that beginners get from $3 to $4 a week in Pittsburgh, and that the percentage of women earning over $7 is small; forty-five per cent to fifty-nine per cent earn from $4 to $6 a week. They work nine or nine and a half hours a day. Here we see that the San Francisco minimum exceeds the general Pittsburgh wage by from $3 to $6 a week. There are no women in the bindery worker's union in Pittsburgh, for the organization, which is small and controls no shops, excludes all workers who are not finishers, forwarders, or rulers, and as no women are thus employed, no woman can be a union member in Pittsburgh.[4]

Bindery work is, on the whole, pleasant. Two kinds of shops are found, large ones, and small ones known as "kitchen shops." The name indicates nothing as to conditions, merely meaning a small one-room establishment carried on at the rear of a stationery store or a small printing office which does pamphlet work. The "kitchen shops" sprang up after the fire and often

[3] *Report of Bureau of Labor Statistics*, New York, 1908, part II, p. 475.
[4] Elizabeth Butler, *Women and the Trades*, pp. 279, 281.

employ but one girl. The large shops are airy and well-lighted, most of them being newly constructed.

Although the industry has greatly expanded, the membership of the Bindery Women's Union, which includes all the women in the trade, has remained practically stationary. A distinct effect of the introduction of machinery shows itself in this industry. With the building of the new shops after the fire, the most improved machinery was installed. Hand folding, for instance, was formerly quite common in the San Francisco shops. Three thousand sheets a day could be folded by hand, but the new machines fold 20,000 sheets. Thus, while women were not thrown out of employment, the new machines put an effectual stop to any increasing demand for labor with the growth of the industry.

At present the membership of the union is 275, the majority of whom are Americans. Most of the members are between the ages of twenty-five and forty. About a third are married women who prefer doing work other than housekeeping. Employment is regular as a rule and two-thirds of the members remain permanently in the shop where they find employment. About a third of the members work irregularly and are inclined to shift about from one establishment to another. In July and August a slack season comes which affects this floating and less skilled element of the bindery workers. Apprentices are compelled by rule of the union to remain in one shop for three years.

The women employed in binderies in Alameda County across the bay from San Francisco come under the jurisdiction of the San Francisco union. This includes the women in seven shops in Oakland and one in Berkeley besides the one at the University of California.

While no great issues have arisen for which the bindery women must contend, and the union has brought about no such remarkable revolution in conditions as did the laundry workers, still, the bindery women can prove that the union has performed a distinct service in maintaining a good standard. For several years previous to the formation of a union, there had been a noticeable tendency toward falling wages. Women who were receiving $7 a week at the time of the organization had been

receiving $10 only three years previous. After the recognition of the union further reduction of wages ceased. At present the minimum is fixed at the point which had been considered normal before the policy of reduction began.

In order to handle properly all the details of management, the union in October, 1909, increased the dues from thirty-five cents a month to fifty cents, making it possible to support an office and employ a secretary who could give her entire time to the business of the organization. This secretary also acts as business agent and is the only paid employee of the union. Aside from these dues, the only other expense attached to belonging to the union is the initiation fee. This is $5 for journey-workers and $2.50 for apprentices. Apprentices pay no dues, but are not allowed any voice or vote in the meetings. A fine of twenty-five cents is imposed for non-attendance at meetings. There are no fines for infringement of rules or agreement, a reprimand being considered a sufficient discipline. Practically all the receipts are required for the expenses of conducting the union.

The business of the organization is in the hands of officers and committees. Elections come yearly. The officers are a president, vice-president, secretary-treasurer, business agent, and recording secretary, the last two being merged into one at present. The union also elects a sergeant-at-arms and an inspector, whose duty it is to see that all who attend the meeting are members. The executive committee consists of five members, three of whom are elected, the president and vice-president being the other two by virtue of their office. Voting is not compulsory.

The local organization does not do a great deal in the way of benefits. The International Bindery Workers' Union has charge of the death benefit of $75. Sick benefit is not a feature of the union, although sick members are visited and aided, if necessary, from private contributions. A change is contemplated in this arrangement and a committee is now working on a plan for a permanent benevolent fund.

Recreative projects have not been made a feature to any degree by this union. An annual ball has been the only social affair undertaken. Some of the leaders feel it might be well to combine some social amusement with the regular meetings in

order to bring out a larger attendance and thus be a means of inducing more interest among the members in the questions which concern working-women. No lively interest in the problems to be solved for the working-women characterizes the rank and file of the membership. Conditions, wages, and hours have improved rather easily and it is natural that the women should not appreciate the service of unionism to a great extent. Many of them admit that they regard the union as necessary, but nevertheless are careless about paying dues and sharing in the work and responsibilities. The leaders in the Bindery Women's Union are notably efficient, broad-minded, and tactful in their dealings with both employers and workers; consequently the members as individuals are undisturbed by the frictions in the shops which might call their attention to the service the union does really perform for them in the way of keeping working conditions pleasant and free from irritation.

PRESS FEEDERS AND ASSISTANTS[1]

Only seven women members are found in the Press Feeders and Assistants. This is one of the earliest trades organized in San Francisco, but the first union was wiped out in 1898 after an unsuccessful strike for the nine-hour day. In 1902 the former members started an agitation which brought about a reorganization in 1903. A strike for the eight-hour day involved all the printing trades in 1905, and in this disturbance the press feeders and assistants shared. After seven weeks the trouble was settled by an agreement to reduce the hours fifteen minutes every six months, which would bring the working day to eight hours at the end of two years. An increase of fifty cents a week in wages every six months for the same period was also gained at this time.

When the reorganization was effected in 1902, forty women were employed as press feeders, but the number has steadily diminished. This is due to the nature of the work. The press feeders are expected to clean the machines, a dirty, disagreeable task which the employers are unwilling to ask women to perform. For this reason the proprietors of the shops will not hire any new women, and as those already in the trade marry or go into other lines of work, they are replaced by men. The wages paid the women are the same as the men receive. Three of the women receive $13.50 a week and four $16.50 a week.[2]

The men of the union say that the women have always been among the most interested and dependable members, and, at the time of the reorganization, worked diligently to promote and encourage the movement. During the strikes the women have always been loyal and helpful. The men have no objection to women in the trade; it is simply owing to the disagreeable features involved in the work that women are not considered suited for the employment.

[1] The facts about this organization were obtained by interviews with the women and from the secretary of the union.

[2] Miss Butler in the Pittsburgh Survey, volume on *Women and the Trades*, gives $5 to $8 a week for the wages of press feeders in the city of Pittsburgh. (p. 279.)

TYPOGRAPHICAL UNION NO. 21[1]

The Typographical Union was one of the first trade organizations formed in San Francisco and has had women as members almost from the first. In 1888, the twenty-seven women belonging to the Typographical Union played a prominent part as witnesses in an investigation being carried on by the state commissioner of labor.[2] Complaints had been made about conditions existing in certain printing shops and the girls belonging to the union were summoned to give evidence, both in regard to the establishments against which complaint had been lodged, and in regard to conditions elsewhere as a basis for comparison. Some of the girls testified that they had been paid only $2.50 to $8 a week at piece-work when employed in the shop under investigation; that they were never allowed to paste and measure their own matter, being forced to accept the proprietor's word as to the amount they had done.[3] Since in the shops where they were afterwards employed they earned $18 to $25 a week, they felt convinced that the proprietor had falsified his estimate in the former instance. They also told of long hours and many personal indignities to which they had been subjected. The unorganized girls from the shop substantiated all that had been said. As a result of the conditions exposed, the Typographical Union instituted a boycott against the shops under investigation.[4]

At present the union's membership of over a thousand includes only fifty women. This number represents the larger part of the women in the trade. Although the number of women in the union has not increased greatly as the years went on, the women have always been interested and helpful in all things concerning the general welfare.

They receive a wage of $24 a week in job offices. In newspaper offices, the rate is $29 a week for day work, and $32 a week

[1] Facts about the union were secured from the secretary.

[2] *San Francisco Examiner*, February 25, 1888.

[3] *San Francisco Examiner*, February 27, 1888.

[4] *San Francisco Examiner*, March 1, 1888.

for night work.[8] The dues are made proportionate to the individual earnings, being one per cent a month for general dues, and one and one-half per cent a month for an old-age pension. This pension amounts to $5 a week after the age of sixty or in case of disablement. The sum given as death benefit is $75 to $400, the amount varying according to the length of membership. No sick benefit is given regularly, but a relief fund is maintained from which loans are made in any case of necessity.

While the women have always proved themselves willing to bear their share of responsibility, naturally they do not play a conspicuous part in union matters because their numbers are so small. Women have seldom held office, and then only in a minor position, but they frequently serve on the committees.

[8] In Pittsburgh, according to Miss Butler, women linotype operators are paid $12 to $18 a week. See *Women and the Trades*, p. 279.

WOMEN'S AUXILIARY, NO. 18, TO TYPOGRAPHICAL UNION, NO. 21[1]

An auxiliary consisting of the wives, mothers, unmarried sisters and unmarried daughters of the members of the Typographical Union was organized June 25, 1903. The objects of the auxiliary are stated to be: "To create a closer and more fraternal feeling between the families of members of the union; to promote sociability; to render assistance necessary in time of sickness and trouble, and for such other beneficial purposes as the majority of the members may elect, particularly that of furtherance of the use of goods bearing the union label."[2]

Not much interest has been shown in the work of the auxiliary. The membership is small. In 1910 the auxiliary disbanded, but was revived a year later, and recently the activities seem to be taking on renewed life and to be developing.

The unions feel the necessity for securing more support from the families of the members, both for the sake of creating public opinion favorable to their undertakings, and for the purpose of giving the members of a trade-unionist's family a better understanding of the problems the bread-winner must meet. As an expression of this sentiment the State Federation of Labor at its last meeting passed a resolution that it would recommend and encourage the formation of women's auxiliaries in all the unions. As yet, in San Francisco the movement has made little headway. The auxiliary to the Typographical Union is the only one showing any activity.

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[1] The president of the Women's Auxiliary, Mrs. Mary Barron, furnished this information.

[2] Constitution of Women's Auxiliary, No. 18.

TOBACCO WORKERS[1]

The Tobacco Workers' Union has but twelve members, all of whom are employed in one shop where tobacco is prepared for chewing and smoking and a few cigarettes are made. Several of the girls work at stripping the leaves, but this process is largely in the hands of Spanish and Indian women who do not belong to the union. The first organization of the tobacco workers was encouraged ten years ago by the manufacturers because they desired the use of the label. Under such circumstances the body has naturally had an uneventful career marked by little activity on the part of the members.[2]

Young girls from sixteen to eighteen years of age constitute the larger part of the membership, only one or two men being included. The president of the union is a man. The girls do not have any clear idea of organization nor any definite conception of what conditions would be desirable for themselves. Regular meetings are not held, the members being called together only in case some question requires discussion. The only accomplishment of the union seems to be the recognition of a minimum wage of $7.50 a week. Several girls earn as much as $12 a week.

The rate of pay in San Francisco does not differ materially from that of New York, where some figures are available for comparison from the report of the Bureau of Labor Statistics for 1908. In Albany the women earn $11 a week working a ten-hour day; in New York City the wage runs from $5 to $10 a week for a nine and a half hour day; Rochester pays $9 a week for a nine-hour day; Syracuse $7.50 for a nine-hour day; Utica has the ten-hour day with a wage of about $8.15 a week.[3] The tobacco workers in San Francisco have the advantage of a shorter day since the eight-hour law went into effect.

Upon shop conditions, the San Francisco union seems to exercise no influence. The factory was roughly reconstructed

[1] For this information the secretary, Miss Kerrigan, was interviewed and the factory visited.

[2] Interview with Mr. Paul Scharrenberg.

after the fire of 1906. The front third of the ground floor is occupied by a saloon. The building is dark, the ceilings low, and the space crowded. On the second floor in the two rooms where the girls work there is an ample supply of windows, but the girls insist upon keeping them closed, with the result that the air is hot and oppressive. The girls complain much of headache. On the ground floor the girls work in a dark space crowded behind the office.

Possibly because of the shifting nature of the membership and because small unions seem to be the general order in the craft, the international body of the tobacco workers has very close supervision over the local organization, a fact which, in turn, reacts on the union itself and prevents it from developing a strong, independent spirit.

All the applications for membership must be sent to the international office, where a record of the age of the applicant and the date of initiation is made. No one over sixty is allowed to join. The due-books for the new member are made out by the international and returned to the local financial secretary. The initiation fee is small, only one dollar, and it may be paid in four weekly installments.[4]

The duties of the local secretary are minutely dictated by the international. In San Francisco she receives no salary, but her dues are remitted. She is employed in the office of the factory and collection of the ten-cent weekly dues on Saturday constitutes practically all her work for so small a union. The stamps used to indicate the payment of initiation fees, dues, fines, and assessments are furnished to the local secretary by the international secretary-treasurer. The account of stamps issued is very strictly kept, and if the local makes application for a greater number of stamps than the international secretary-treasurer thinks necessary, an investigation is ordered. In making the collection, the local secretary uses a system of duplicating books similar to a shop collector's list. When the collection is finished, she divides the amount into two portions; a third of the

[3] Report of the Bureau of Labor Statistics, New York, 1908, part II, p. 511.

[4] Constitution of Tobacco Worker's International Union.

initiation fees, dues, international fines and assessments and all receipts for purely local assessments are retained for a local fund. In San Francisco this would amount to about forty cents a week. According to the constitution of the tobacco workers, this money must be deposited in the bank in the presence of two trustees. The treasurer's warrants used by the local union for all expenditures are prepared and furnished by the international office. The remainder of the fund collected, along with one of the duplicated sheets, is sent to the international headquarters. The collection sheets are filed away after the amounts thereon have been credited to the accounts of the various members. The money at the international office is divided into three funds: A third goes into the "general expense fund" from which the cost of conducting the international office, salaries, organization, and label agitation is paid; a third constitutes a sick and death benefit fund; the remaining third forms a strike benefit fund. The collection from the local must be forwarded to the head office within forty-eight hours. If a week's delay occurs an investigation is instituted by the international president and executive board.[5]

The payment of benefits is entirely taken out of local management. To obtain the sick benefit of $3 a week, formal application must be made to the international body on blanks furnished for that purpose. First an examination must be made by the local physician authorized for such service. A committee of three persons must visit every week during the illness, no two calling at the same time. Benefit payments do not begin until two weeks after the case is reported, but in case of long illness it may begin from the date of the first report. Hedged around thus carefully by restrictions, it is not surprising to learn that no member of the San Francisco union has ever asked for sick benefits, for it would probably appear easier and less irritating to a sick person to do without them. In case of strike, assistance to the amount of $3 a week is allowed, commencing on the day when the difficulty is approved by the proper authorities of the international. All local difficulties are acted upon by the international. The system of reports and investigations is complicated

[5] Constitution of the Tobacco Workers' International Union.

and would appear to be sufficient to discourage the local union from attempting to correct conditions which required remedying.[6]

The Tobacco Workers' Union is too small to have developed any distinctive conditions that have significance. It does present an interesting study in structure because of the minute details to which the direct attention of the international body is given.

[6] Constitution of Tobacco Workers' International Union.

UNITED GARMENT WORKERS[1]

Local Union, No. 131, of the United Garment Workers was established in San Francisco in 1900 through the instrumentality of the Labor Council. The women engaged in the garment trades had been previously organized into a "Cloakmakers' Union,"[2] but in September, 1900, resolved to join with the men and affiliate with the United Garment Workers of America. "It was decided to make a vigorous fight against all unfair firms." The name was changed and the finances of the union arranged on a basis to conform with the constitution of the international body.[3] For several months a campaign for increased membership was carried on with evident success, for the workers became much interested and 1800 signified their willingness to join the movement.[4] Only about eleven hundred actually did enter the union, however, owing to the opposition of the employers. Previous to this enlargement in the scope of the organization with its consequent growth in numbers and gain in power, the hours of work in the garment trade were irregular, excessively long during the busy season, excessively short or no employment at all if the season were dull. The girls were charged for all repairs on the machinery, for needles and for belting. Needles cost five cents for three, and a belt cost twenty-five cents. Some weeks as much as $2 or $3 was deducted from the pay for repairs. The immediate effect of the order established by the union in the shops it controlled was to abolish these charges, to increase the wages ten to twenty per cent, and to regulate the working hours to eight a day.

About two years after this organization was effected the men cutters became dissatisfied and sought to withdraw into a union of their own. The women, who far outnumbered the men, re-

[1] The *Labor Clarion*, interviews with the secretary, Miss Hagen, and Mr. Paul Scharrenberg furnished much of this information. Factories were visited and employers have been interviewed.

[2] *San Francisco Examiner*, September 19, 1900.

[3] *San Francisco Examiner*, October 12, 1900.

[4] *San Francisco Examiner*, April 12, 1901.

fused to permit their withdrawal at first, but after three months of conflict, the women voted the men $250 to start a separate organization. The new union was not a success and the men sought to return to the original body. The women refused to receive them and cutters are not admitted to the union at the present time. Men employed at other branches of the garment trade coming under the jurisdiction of the United Garment Workers are included in the membership. The men are few and the affairs of the union are entirely in the hands of the women.

No notable changes have taken place since the first agreement with the employers was framed. In spite of its encouraging beginning, the union has not succeeded in extending its power. The great earthquake and fire of 1906 dealt the organization a severe blow. Many members were entirely lost from the knowledge of the union, although efforts were at once made to locate members through the papers, and a meeting was held within a month of the disaster. The union was reduced in numbers about half at this time, nor has it ever regained its lost ground since. Many of the factories which had employed union workers were not rebuilt; others resumed work under non-union conditions.[5] At the present time only two factories in San Francisco are union shops. These factories manufacture overalls, shirts, and other garments much in demand by workingmen, and only by use of the label can they command the class of trade they desire. Both supply mining districts where union feeling runs high. The influence of this factor is what forced the recognition of the United Garment Workers in the first days of the organization.[6]

This event happened in 1901 and furnishes an excellent example of the force of a well-sustained boycott. In that year a

[5] One manufacturer stated that this was brought about by the unreasonable attitude of the union in refusing to make any concessions during the stress of the days following the fire when the employers were under great difficulty in re-establishing the industry. Several non-union manufacturers made similar statements as a reason for not unionizing their hands, saying that the union was too dictatorial in its tone and too difficult to deal with. Another non-union employer, on the contrary, said he thought the union requirements very reasonable and fair, but that he did not wish to subject himself to any outside interference in dealing with his employees.

[6] Interview with Mr. Paul Scharrenberg, secretary of the State Federation of Labor.

strong effort was made to break the power of trade-unionism in San Francisco.[7] Many small, struggling organizations were wiped out and the employers in the garment trades were hostile toward the efforts of the newly unionized workers to establish union regulations in the factories. The Labor Council recognized the necessity for the unions as a whole to take some action to show their power, and urged, as a point susceptible to attack, a boycott against garments not bearing the union label. Letters were sent to the mining districts strongly appealing to the unions for their support in the effort. The result of this was that a carload of goods sent by one of the factories into the mining country was returned because the garments did not bear the label. The manufacturer at once signified his desire to open under union conditions in order to obtain the label which he saw was necessary to the maintenance of his business. Only two factories were subject to this form of persuasion, and these two are the only factories meeting the terms of the union at the present time. The other factories supply a rural trade to a large extent, shipping to the smaller towns where trade-union sympathy is practically unknown and where the label has no effect on the sale of goods.

The trade itself is so open to outside competition that the union realizes that it cannot hope to control local conditions and make them differ materially from those elsewhere. The producer must meet the prices of his business rivals from all over the country and he cannot pay higher wages and run shorter hours and do this. Wages in San Francisco are therefore about the same as in other localities. The piece-payment system furnishes the basis of wages. The work is minutely subdivided, no girl making an entire garment. The average earned is $9 a week; the minimum wage permitted is $1 a day. Folders receive $8 a week; examiners are paid $10; $9 is the minimum for boxers. The garments are laundered on the premises, which necessitated a special agreement with the Laundry Workers that these women should come under the jurisdiction of the Garment Workers. They are paid the rates usual in the steam laundries, earning

[7] See account of the Waitresses' Union.

from $8 to $18 according to the work. The employer fixes the wages for apprentices in all branches and the number is not limited.

The outside factor that the union can attack is the prison-made garment and against such goods a constant war is in progress. The labels used on prison-made garments have been carefully collected and are displayed wherever possible with the hope that people will not buy if they recognize the articles as the product of convict labor. The union does not oppose the manufacture of goods in prisons, and the leaders in discussing the question, it should be said, show a sympathetic understanding for the need of occupation and training for convicts. The action discountenanced is the furnishing of these goods to local dealers at a price so low that home manufacturers must keep down wages and work standards to meet the competition. The union claims that two-thirds of the shirts on sale in San Francisco are prison-made, but several employers consider this estimate far too high.

One of the chief objects of the union has been the protection of its members from the rivalry of the Chinese. Simultaneously with its efforts toward enlargement and reconstruction, the union began a campaign against this alien labor. Definite action was taken to substitute white workers for the Chinese. In April, 1901, we find this report: "The union has received assurances from the national organization that it will do all it can to induce white help to come to the state to take the places of the Chinese. The local body will endeavor to supplant the Chinese garment-workers as rapidly as possible with white labor."[8] At the time of the organization of the white garment workers the sweat-shop feature of the trade in San Francisco was largely in the hands of the Chinese. Overcrowding in one or two rooms was common, where they lived, ate and slept with the bundles of clothes being made. Chinese owned a large number of the stores selling sweated goods, although most of them employed white salespeople. Frequently a white man acted as agent, contracting for goods and then hiring the Chinese to do the work. The Garment Workers' Union asserts that these conditions still

[8] *San Francisco Examiner*, April 28, 1901.

menace the security of the white workers unless they constantly guard against the employment of Chinese in the trade.[9]

The union exhibits more alarm over this Oriental rivalry than the manufacturers regard as having foundation. Three manufacturers, the leading ones in the city, said that they felt no business competition from Chinese-made goods, that the greater part of such garments was made entirely for Chinese consumption.[10] As to comparative wages, the manufacturers stated that the Chinese themselves were now as strongly organized as the white workers and would not work for less. The number of Orientals in San Francisco is decreasing also because of the Exclusion Act, which prohibits coolie labor from entering the United States, and because, of late years, the Chinese already here have been returning to their own country. Taken altogether the employers do not feel that at present the Chinese are a serious rival to the white workers.

Fear of workers who may overstock the labor market and reduce wages is natural in the garment trade, which is subject to seasonal changes. The union has taken action to equalize conditions that may arise from a dull season. Before unionizing, many of the girls were laid off entirely at times. Now all members work, sharing equally the burden of slackness by shortening the hours for each worker and making three-fourths time the usual day for such seasons. In the branch of trade carried on in the union shops, that of making men's wear, November is the month when the workers say they experience the effects of a dull condition. Demand has some influence, but difficulty in obtaining raw material is given as the chief cause. As to the effect of the slack season, the owner of the largest plant in the city, a non-

[9] The *Fourteenth Biennial Report of the California Bureau of Labor Statistics* (1909–1910) states that there are ten establishments in San Francisco employing Chinese in clothing manufacture. The total number of Chinese employed is ninety-two, four of whom are cutters, forty-eight tailors, and forty operators. The operators are paid from $6 to $8.99 a week. In five establishments the sanitary conditions were reported good, and in five fair. (pp. 109, 342, 348.)

[10] At the request of the writer, several Chinese students at the University of California made an investigation of the amount of garment-making among the Chinese. They reported that a few years ago two Chinese families took work to their homes, but did not now do so. They stated that the garments made by the Chinese establishments were used exclusively by the Chinese.

union factory, said he seldom found it necessary to lay off any of his employees. The dull season in his factory came during the summer, when many of the girls leave of their own accord to go into the country to work at the fruit industry. They leave thus temporarily in a sufficient number to make it unnecessary for the factory to lay off those workers who elect to remain in the city.

In the union shops no one can be discharged without first receiving a warning, and when such a warning is given, the Garment Workers' Union looks into the merits of the case before dismissal is permitted. In this respect this union differs in its practice from other women's unions, which do not interfere in such cases.

The working day was limited to eight hours in union shops when the first agreement was made, but the girls decided to work eight hours and fifteen minutes each day for five days in order to have Saturday afternoons free. The law limiting the workday for women to eight hours put an end to this arrangement on May 1, 1911. The garment workers never favored the new law and its effects on them have not made the girls more satisfied. They cannot now have their half-holiday because they are forbidden to work the extra fifteen minutes each day which made it possible. Instead of being able to earn a little extra by working overtime during the busy season, the girls see temporary help employed. These new people must be taken into the union, although their services are required for only a short period during the year. When the dull season comes this means that more members will be thrown out of employment, and the union, according to its established practice, will be forced to share the work with the extra, transient people who are not required in the trade at all excepting for a brief, busy period.

Among the members who have been in the organization since its earlier days, as many of them have, there is a strong bond of fellowship. Naturally the members do not entertain a very friendly regard for non-union workers, whom they feel are reaping the benefit of the standard the union set without sharing any of the responsibilities. During the period when the garment workers were carrying on their active campaign for increasing

membership and installing the union label, working conditions underwent a gradual change in the factories.[11] When interviewed several employers admitted that they did shorten hours and make various concessions to keep their employees satisfied, because the agitation carried on by the organizers was causing unrest and discontent. The union claims that really it is, then, responsible for keeping up the standard in all the shops, for it educated the girls in the trade to demand certain conditions, and that when these conditions were established in some of the shops through their instrumentality, the only way the other factories could keep their employees was to give them as good or better conditions in the open shops as were found in the union shops. The union members are convinced that they have born the labor and expense of the fight for better conditions and that the others have benefited equally without being willing to share the burden. Union girls as a rule will not accept employment in an open shop, simply on the ground of personal feeling toward the women who do not join the organization. The union takes pride in the efficiency of its members and desires them to raise the grade of their work so that the girls from the union may be recognized as being the most skilled operators.

With the shifting in the class of membership, the leaders have found themselves becoming more and more an educative influence about standards of work and living. The older members of the union are Americans, but Americans do not enter the trade to any great extent of recent years. Italians constitute the major part of the new workers. Late years have shown more changes in the personnel of the workers in the union shops than formerly. Most of the Italian girls live with their own people, so the ideals as to the standard of living which the union instills into the newcomers reaches into the home life of the unassimilated immigrant.

The internal organization of the Garment Workers' Union presents no distinctive features. The annual agreements are sent out by the international headquarters. The local has never had occasion to make alterations to suit special needs, although

[11] *San Francisco Examiner*, April 12, 1901; April 28, 1901; October 12, 1900; September 19, 1900.

permitted to do so by the international body. The initiation fee is $3 for journey-workers, and $1 for apprentices. An apprentice is allowed to work two months to determine whether she wishes to remain at the trade before she is required to join the union. The dues are fifty-five cents a month. Sick benefit of $5 a week is paid, and $100 is given in case of death. Regular assessments for the latter fund have been suspended, as the union found it was accumulating an unnecessary surplus. In case of a death a twenty-five cent special assessment is levied on each member. The expenses of conducting the union do not absorb the entire receipts, and the union has a substantial fund with which it could meet strikes or other emergencies.

Since its establishment the Garment Workers' Union has always taken an active part in the work of the general labor movement. Among the other organizations, the women of the garment workers are considered the most intelligent class as a whole in the entire body of trade-union women. Certainly they include in their membership a number of women of marked ability who play leading parts in the matters that concern the workers. There can be no doubt that this union has been an influence in keeping the line of development in the garment industry moving upward. They have been untiring in their educational activities and by means of label agitation, by speaking, and by investigations into the conditions of the trade in all its phases, the union has attempted successfully to create a sentiment and a standard that has prevented the industry from taking a turn downward to conditions of sweat-shop labor and low pay. Much of its educative work, such as that done in assimilating the Italian girls who enter the trade, is of that subtle kind which is a potent, but often unrecognized and unappreciated influence in bettering the lot of wage-earners as a whole.

JOURNEYMAN TAILORS, NO. 2[1]

Out of a membership of some 700, about 250 are women in the Journeymen Tailors' Union. This shows a decrease from eight years ago when about half were women. The women vary in numbers, however, so no exact estimate can be given as to their permanent proportion to the men. They work at the simpler operations on coats, trousers, and vests. Some of the women are employed in factories and others are engaged in contract work, although this latter form is discouraged as much as possible by the union because it cannot control the shop conditions for contract work as it can for work done in the factory. While union members are found in all the San Francisco tailoring establishments, only three are closed shops.

The journeymen tailors have never had a general strike. Trouble has occurred in certain shops, but the trade was never involved as a whole.

The minimum wage for women journey-workers is $10.50 a week. Apprentices receive $6. Work is plentiful for women, the demand for their labor usually exceeding the supply. In this respect they are more fortunate than the men, for among the latter there are periods of marked unemployment, and during all seasons a few of the men are unable to find work.

As men work at a branch of the trade which is more highly paid than that of the women, a distinction is made in the amount of dues required by the union. For women, dues are seventy-five cents a month while for men they are $1 a month. The initiation fee is $2. In case of illness a sick benefit of $5 a week is given, and there is a death benefit of $100.

The women do not take an active part in the affairs of the journeymen tailors, although some have held office. The majority of them are young, and there is considerable shifting in the personnel of the women membership which prevents them from developing much interest or exerting any great influence upon the union.

[1] Several members of the union, the local secretary, Mr. Abrams, and the national organizer furnished this information.

CRACKER BAKERS' AUXILIARY[1]

In 1902 an organization of the girls in the cracker industry was effected, but it lasted only six months because the girls could not agree among themselves.

In November, 1909, the girls who worked at the soda bench in one of the factories found themselves so overburdened that they were forced to ask for a decrease in the amount of work. The soda bench is a long table divided into bins, with a girl standing at each section. From the baking room below, the crackers are conveyed on a carrying apron and automatically dumped in equal portions into each bin. The girls pack the crackers into boxes, the work demanding a quick dexterity to keep the bins clear. So rapidly do the crackers accumulate that it is impossible to leave the bin unattended even for a moment, and, as the girls worked standing for nine and a half hours, they found the strain severe. A few weeks prior to November, 1909, speeding up was attempted on the soda bench in one of the factories. The girls found it an impossible task to keep their packing even with the steady stream of crackers which overflowed the bins. The fifteen girls employed in this department held a shop meeting, made their difficulty known to the manager, and requested a decrease in the speed. This was promised, but at the end of two weeks the speeding had begun again. Once more the girls held a meeting and stated their complaint. Another promise was given that the condition should be remedied, but ending with the same result as before. The third time the experience was repeated, the girls at the soda bench walked out.

The employer tried to induce the cake girls to take up the work but they refused and went out in sympathy with the others. After they had gone out on strike, the girls telephoned the secretary of the Labor Council asking for advice and help. The secretary replied that they could not receive assistance from

[1] Interviews with the employers, with Miss Daisy Mack, the secretary of the Cracker Bakers' Auxiliary, and visits to the factories supplied the facts about this union.

the Council because they were not members of a union, and advised the girls to organize. This they were willing to do but some difficulties had to be overcome, for over half the girls were Italians, many of whom could not understand English. Moreover, while the cake girls sympathized with the strikers, they themselves had no grievance against the employers; they were poor and could not afford to be out of work. In order to keep up interest and enthusiasm among those who did not fully comprehend and who therefore might have given up, the strikers held daily meetings.

As soon as the girls agreed to stand together and act in harmony, the organizing committee of the Labor Council arranged for a meeting with the girls employed in the other two cracker factories in the city. Only the strikers and the employees of one of the factories came to this meeting. The Cracker Bakers' Auxiliary was organized at this time and the girls formulated a definite request which would remedy the conditions against which they were in rebellion.

The secretary of the Labor Council then called upon the employers of the strikers. The positions were being filled inefficiently by inexperienced hands and the employers were glad to come to some understanding. Through the instrumentality of the Labor Council secretary the trouble was adjusted, the demand for relief was granted, and all of the girls were taken back to work after being out only one week. Three extra girls were employed to assist at the soda bench, and this made it possible for the girls to meet the extra work occasioned by the increased speed.

The girls who had joined the union continued to work quietly among the unorganized employees of the other factory, and by the end of three months all of them had secretly affiliated. The next step was to get the union recognized in this factory. After a number of conferences with representatives of the Labor Council, the employers agreed to recognize the union, one of the chief arguments being that since the men were organized, it did not seem just to deny the same right to the girls. This was accomplished, however, only after six months of discussion. Three more meetings were held with the manufacturers before

the first schedule was approved and signed on the seventh of October, 1910.

By the terms of this first agreement, hours were regulated, provision was made for necessary relief packers, and wages were increased. Nine working hours were designated for five days, and an eight-hour day for Saturday. Overtime was limited to three hours a day and, with holidays, was to be paid for at the rate of time and a half. Three relief girls were to be employed regularly on the soda bench of one of the plants and two relief girls for the same work at one of the other factories. These extra girls were to pack crackers and to relieve the others at the soda bench when called on, enabling each girl to have ten minutes free from work in the morning and ten minutes in the afternoon.

The wage established by this agreement was that soda girls were to be paid $1.75 a day and the relief girls who had less work and responsibility were to receive $1.50 a day.

The cake girls, who had been receiving $1 a day, were to be paid $1.25 after three months' experience. Inexperienced hands were to have $5 a week for six weeks, then $1 a day until they had worked three months. One of the factories agreed to pay $1 a day from the beginning to inexperienced girls.[2]

The icing-room girls were to receive $1.25 a day after four and a half months, and $1 a day before that with the exception of the first six weeks, when the minimum was $5 a week.

Wrappers are at piece work and average $10 to $12 a week. To earn this much swiftness and dexterity are required.

The work of the cake girls does not require the skill nor involve the physical strain that the work of the soda girls does, so the wage demand is not placed as high. The cake girls are engaged in packing cakes into boxes. From the baking room the cakes are conveyed on wire trays carried on a belt which moves very slowly. On either side of the belt the girls stand in a row and gather the cakes into neat piles on the narrow ledge before them. They then pack the cakes into the boxes. A man stands

[2] Miss Butler in the Pittsburgh Survey gives $5 a week as the usual wage for cake girls. Only three per cent in the entire industry earn over $7. Ninety-six per cent earn $3 to $6.99. *Women and the Trades*, pp. 69–70.

at the end of the table and removes each tray as it reaches the end, dumping the remaining cakes into a large box.

In the icing-room much of the work is done by hand and the girls are seated most of the time. Two girls sit opposite each other at a table on which is placed a large pan of icing. The cakes are immersed in this by the handful and then passed across to another girl who rolls them in cocoanut and places them in rows on a large wooden tray. For another variety the cakes are first arranged on the trays and the icing is then dropped on them through a funnel attached to a bag-like top which is filled with the icing. Nuts, cocoanut, and fruit are sprinkled on by hand by other girls.

A machine is used for the simple process of covering a large number of cakes with plain icing. Racks with fork-like projections on each side are swung between narrow carrying belts. A row of girls seated on both sides of the table across which the racks move slowly stick the cakes on the projections. The cakes are carried on into the hands of a girl who sits in front of a huge trough filled with icing. She lifts the rack, immerses it in the trough, and hangs it back into place between the belts. As the conveyor moves on, the superfluous icing on the cakes is caught as it drips on a wide canvas belt which brings it back to the trough. The racks continue to move until automatically stopped in the position where they remain until dry, forming an attractive tier of iced cakes extending almost from ceiling to floor.

The union believes that the wage in the cake department should be raised, but does not think it wise to take up the matter until time has been given for the industry to adjust itself to the new law limiting the working hours to eight a day. The chief desire of the girls has been for an eight-hour day and since that has become effective by state law, the union is content to make no new demands for the present. Aside from the original increase of wages at the time the union was organized, no other change has been instituted.

When the eight-hour day first became the rule, the working hours were irregular and the employees felt considerable dissatisfaction because there was no definite understanding in regard

to the shifts they might be called to work on. This has been adjusted without difficulty.

All the girls employed in the cracker factories now belong to the Cracker Bakers' Auxiliary, making a membership of over two hundred. A girl on first entering the industry is allowed to work six weeks before joining the union. Thirty days is given for making payment of the initiation fee, which is $2.50 for the girls earning over $1 a day, and $1.50 for those who earn less. The dues are forty cents a month, of which fifteen cents for each member goes to support the international body. Until January, 1911, the girls were merely auxiliary to the men's union, but since then they have separated and now have their funds apart. The girls meet twice a month, and twice a month there is a joint meeting of representatives from the pie bakers, bread bakers, cracker bakers, and cracker packers.

The officers are those customary in every union, a president, vice-president, recording secretary, financial secretary, a sergeant-at- arms, and three trustees. As yet no one gives her entire time to the work of the union and no business agent is employed.

A large majority of the girls in the cracker industry are Italians. The secretary of the organization is a pretty, efficient young American who works at the soda bench in the factory where the girls had their first trouble. The president is an Italian who has a good knowledge of English, the combination making her particularly valuable to the union, for many of the members are not familiar with the English tongue nor with American ideals and conditions.

The sacrifice of time and wages which the girls proved themselves willing to make for the sake of bettering conditions for their co-workers marked the beginning of this union's history and still shows itself in a tie of personal friendship among the members of the union. The Cracker Bakers' Auxiliary is noticeable for a feeling of personal responsibility for its members. The factories are situated at the edge of a bad district of San Francisco, and the older girls exert an effort to keep the members off the street during the noon hour. Reading is frequently the means employed. This form of endeavor may have been suggested by the fact that one of the factories had established a rest-room

made attractive for the purpose of counteracting the effect of the street. The Cracker Bakers' Union, like the garment workers, is confronted with the problem of assimilating a foreign population unfamiliar with the society and the conditions of life into which they have come. It is meeting the problem in a spirit which displays a feeling of personal responsibility for each other which is more noticeable in this union than in any other.

MUSICIANS' MUTUAL PROTECTIVE UNION[1]

The Musicians' Union is twenty-six years old and women have been included in its membership from the beginning. The total number of members is about 1200, but only forty or fifty are women, and of these not more than twenty play steadily. They are employed in moving-picture theaters and restaurants, and furnish music for dances.

The initiation fee in this union is $100. Dues are fifty cents a month. A death benefit of $100 is paid. A relief fund administered by a board of five is made up of ten per cent of the net receipts of the organization.

In the business of the Musicians' Union the women do not take any active part. Three-fourths of them are married or have some means of support which does not make them entirely dependent upon the profession for a living, and naturally they do not take the interest in the conditions that they would if their livelihood were more vitally concerned. With two or three exceptions, the women are willing to play for less than men will accept, a fact which causes considerable irritation toward them on the part of the general membership.

[1] The secretary of the musicians and several members furnished this information.

OFFICE EMPLOYEES[1]

The union of office employees has been in existence a little over a year.[2] The membership is about 100, only ten of whom are women. These are girls employed in union offices or in establishments where the closed shop is the rule. The initiation fee is $1 and dues are fifty cents a month. The work of the union is as yet undeveloped. Office employees in general do not exhibit much interest in organizing, most of the girls who work in offices, in fact, declaring that they do not wish to belong to a union.

[1] Members of the Office Employees Union furnished this information.
[2] April 1, 1912.

BOTTLE CANERS[1]

The membership of the Bottle Caners Union is made up of the men and women engaged in weaving the basket casings around wine-bottles. The work requires considerable deftness and is very hard on the hands, for the ribbon-like reeds frequently cut the workers' fingers as she handles her material. Some of the girls displayed long cuts on their fingers and across their palms which appeared sore and painful. Only forty-two people are employed in the two shops; ten are men and thirty-two are girls. The men cane the large bottles, and the girls work on the smaller sizes.

The initiation fee is $2.50 and the dues are thirty-five cents a month. A $50 death benefit is the only benevolent feature.

The Bottle Caners have been organized since 1896, the men in the trade starting the movement. No conditions of work or wages were behind the inception of the union, nor did the workers ask for any change when they were recognized. The bottle caners have had but one strike and that was some eight years ago.[2] The employees work at piece-work and had always been accustomed to coming and going as they pleased. The employers wish to lower the rate of pay and insist upon consecutive hours of work, to both of which the union objected. The strike lasted for five months and the shops did no work during the entire period, as they had a sufficiently large stock of bottles ready for the market to meet the demands of the trade. At the end of five months, the conciliation committee of the Labor Council intervened and the caners went back to work under the conditions existing before the strike.

The work is subject to seasonal changes, the girls being laid off for a month or two at times. The men earn $3.50 a day, and the women average $2 a day. The union has a rule which prohibits speeding up, so the above represents the maximum wage.

[1] The members were interviewed for these facts.

[2] The exact date could not be ascertained, probably 1902 or 1903.

While the Bottle Caners' Union is small, it is highly spoken of by labor officials for its interest, intelligence, and fidelity in matters concerning trade-unionism in general. The girls are Americans, and taken altogether, form the most attractive group encountered in any of the industries.

WAITRESSES' UNION, NO. 48[1]

In San Francisco in 1901, some five hundred girls were employed in restaurants. In addition to waiting on tables, they were expected to scrub floors and chairs, to clean the fixtures, and to wash and scour the silver and glass. They had to cut melons, make sandwiches, and prepare all the cold dishes, such as berries, butter, and salads, for serving. The work day was from fourteen to sixteen hours and the girls were expected to keep continually busy, no regular time even being allowed for meals. These waitresses worked seven days a week, receiving for their excessive toil $4 or $5.

The girls worked under a variety of difficulties. Conditions in the restaurants were unsanitary; the kitchens were dirty and poorly equipped. Under any circumstances, the occupation is one of the hardest a woman can enter. A waitress must carry heavily loaded trays, weighing from fifteen to twenty-five pounds, over a slippery floor, every muscle being strained by the lifting, balancing, and walking required by her task. She must be quick and alert, must remember vaguely-given orders accurately, must often meet unreasonableness and insult with amiable indifference. These facts, coupled with long hours, arduous labor, and unsanitary conditions, made the lot of the waitress extremely hard.

The beginning of a change was instituted in January, 1901, when twenty-five waiters and waitresses held a meeting and determined to take active steps toward bettering working conditions existing in restaurants. For about five years the men had been organized into the Cooks' and Waiters' Alliance, but had not exercised much influence. After the meeting of January, the girls worked several months spreading interest among the others, and on April 2, 1901, formed a branch of the men's union.[2]

When 210 girls had been persuaded to join the sixty-three who had signed the roll in April, and the strength of the organization seemed sufficient, the workers decided to submit their schedule and make their new demands.[3] The schedule provided

[1] Members and officers of the union furnished the facts about this organization.

[2] *San Francisco Examiner*, April 3, 1901.

[3] *Ibid.*, April 30, 1901.

that ten hours should constitute a working-day, and six days should be regarded as the working-week. Girls steadily employed ten hours a day were to be paid $8 a week; lunch and dinner girls, working three hours, were to receive $1.25 a week; girls serving on Sundays and holidays for four hours or less were to be paid $1.25; an overtime rate of twenty-five cents an hour was established. Recognition of the union was included in the demands.

The proprietors refused to treat with the union or to promise to conform to the schedule. Back of the position taken by the proprietors was the voiced determination of many San Francisco business men to destroy the growing power of trade-unionism. One proprietor said, "If we get no settlement every restaurant man in San Francisco will close his doors and there will be the bitterest labor fight this city has ever known. The wholesale merchants and the business interests of the city will be behind the restaurant men."[4]

During the first two weeks of the strike the trouble spread rapidly. Many waiters and waitresses joined their lot with the strikers, among them 200 waiters from the French and Italian restaurants.[5] The supply houses gave strong backing to the restaurants, some going to the extreme of refusing to sell provisions to the restaurants which were conducting business under union terms.[6] This action called for retaliation on the part of the labor unions, and sympathetic strikes were instituted; the teamsters refused to carry provisions to the non-union restaurants; the bakers declined to bake bread for establishments refusing to treat with the strikers; innumerable ramifications of sympathetic trouble displayed themselves in almost every industry in the city. For several weeks excitement ran high and the waiters and waitresses seemed to be on the highway to winning their contentions. Then, many of the employers began to declare that they had all the help they needed and were no longer inconvenienced by the strike.[7] On the other hand, some

[4] *San Francisco Examiner*, April 30, 1901.
[5] *Ibid.*, May 4, 1901.
[6] *Ibid.*, May 6, 1901.
[7] *San Francisco Examiner*, May 7, 1901; May 10, 1901.

of the restaurants signed the agreement with the union, but not a sufficiently large number to give employment to all the workers.

No definite, satisfactory termination came to the strike. The trouble continued for six months and caused much suffering to the strikers. The employers denied that they maintained a blacklist, but nevertheless the union girls were repeatedly turned away without work at their own trade or in any other line in which they applied.[8] Their low wages had not permitted the girls to save any money. Many of them walked the streets and went hungry. Finally some of the girls left the city; others assumed a false name and went back to work under the old, hard conditions.

The waitresses had not abandoned their resolve to gain their contentions, but they employed more subtle means than direct action. The girls continued a diligent, steady, but quiet campaign of education which brought results both in working conditions and in power through an increasing membership for the union. The first concession gained was the one day out of each week and an allowance of half an hour for meals. Shorter hours, cleaner kitchens, and proper utensils all followed in time. By February, 1906, the workers had obtained most of the improvements toward which they had been directing their efforts. The membership had increased to about 400. In 1906 the waitresses formed an organization separate from the men, as they felt their problems were now distinct in many ways. All the crafts of the trade continue to have a joint board, however, which meets once a month. It consists of delegates from each craft, three waiters, three cooks, three bartenders, three dishwashers, and three waitresses.

Since the separation into a distinct union the waitresses have steadily added to their numbers and their influence. A regular office for the transaction of business is maintained. Three officers give their entire time to the work of the union and each receives a salary. The secretary who has charge of the office is paid $15 a week, and the two business agents each receive $10 a week. The president, vice-president, the inside guard, and the three trustees each receive $1 a month; the treasurer and the recording secretary are paid $2 a month. Paying these minor

[8] *Ibid.*, May 4, 1901.

officials is not customary in other women's unions. A member may serve as an officer only a year at a time, when she must go back and work at the trade for six months before again becoming a candidate. This rule does not apply to those officers receiving a salary of less than $5 a month.

The activities of the union are supported by initiation fees and dues. The initiation fee is $2.80, of which $1 is due at the time of joining and the remainder inside of two weeks. The monthly dues were sixty cents, but were raised to seventy-five cents during the year 1911 because the expenses of the organization were greater than they had been in the past. If a member who is not ill fails to pay her dues for two months, she must pay twenty-five cents in addition to all dues for reinstatement. All white women who are working at the craft are eligible for membership.

Benefits are a feature of the waitresses' union. The local body pays a death benefit of $50 if a girl has been a member for thirty days, and if she has been a member for six consecutive months the international office of the union pays an additional $50. In case a member is in arrears for dues, fines, or assessments for more than thirty days, she forfeits all right to any benefit. The waitresses own a plot in the cemetry where any who die without relatives or friends are buried. The union also provides medical aid in case of sickness and makes a practice of helping any member who is in need by individual contributions.

That the waitresses' union has gained favor by its policies is evidenced by the fact that most of the restaurants that employ women in San Francisco have agreed to recognize the union and secure waitresses through its headquarters. This is a substantial victory in view of the hostility with which the first efforts of the girls were greeted. The organization has found favor with the employers because it has shown its willingness to coöperate in promoting their interests. The union has a rule that individually and collectively the members will interest themselves in protecting the business and trade of the employer under contract with the union. Responsibility is assumed by the union for any girl secured through the office. The waitress is required to give the employer notice if she expects to quit her work, eight hours'

notice for those working full time, and three hours notice if she is a lunch waitress. A fine of $1 is imposed if she fails to do this. A girl who does not report for duty at the time specified is fined $1. If a waitress is required to work overtime by the failure of another girl to relieve her, the wages for the overtime must be paid by the one causing the extra labor.

Before the eight-hour law for women went into effect, ten hours constituted the working-day. Under that condition the following scale was paid:[9]

Ten hours on duty within 14 hours	$10.00 a week
Nine hours on duty within 14 hours	9.00 a week
Eight hours on duty	8.00 a week
Ten hours on duty at night work	11.00 a week
Lunch waitresses, 3 hours or less	1.00
Dinner waitresses, 3 hours or less	.85
Ten hours, special occasions, conventions, etc.	2.50 a day
Banquets, parties, weddings, 4 hours or less	2.25
To set up, and serve 5 hours	2.75
Sunday lunch or dinner, 3 hours or less	1.25
To set up, serve and clear off, 6 hours	3.00
All overtime for restaurants, 1 hour or less	.35
Special uniform, white, extra	.50

After the law limiting women's working hours to eight a day, the following schedule was agreed upon between the proprietors and the union:

Seven and one-half hours within eight hours straight	$8.00 a week
Eight hours within 12 hours straight or broken	9.00 a week
From 6 to 12 P.M., night work	8.00 a week
After 9 o'clock at night	10.00 a week
Lunch waitresses, 3 hours or less	1.00
Lunch waitresses, 2 hours, 6 days	5.00
Sunday lunch or dinner, 3 hours or less	.85
All special occasions, conventions, etc., 8 hours	2.50
Banquets, parties, weddings, 4 hours or less	2.25
All overtime for banquets, 1 hour or less	.50

"Steady girls cannot shell peas, string rhubarb, peel apples; must not clean coffee urns, windows or ice boxes or scrub chairs. The lunch girls may not sweep, clean catsup bottles or mustard pots, or polish silver, and are not allowed to pick strawberries."[10]

During any convention or other special occasion resulting in the arrival of large numbers of visitors, when more than a usual

[9] Printed schedule of wages of Waitresses' Union.

[10] Printed agreement of the Waitresses' Union.

number of employees is required, a regular girl must substitute on the seventh day of each week and must be compensated at the rate of time and a half. Relief waitresses working four days or less, eight hours within twelve hours, "straight or broken time," receive $2 a day. For more than four days a girl receives the usual wage of the waitress she relieves.

The personnel of the waitresses' union receives more criticism than is accorded to the women in the other unions. Various reasons seem to explain this attitude. The waitresses raise most of their funds for relief and sick benefits from their large annual ball. This ball provokes considerable disapproval. One of the main features is a bar, and from the sale of drinks the receipts are $600 to $800. The sum thus derived goes into the benevolent fund. The waitresses as a body and individually exhibit considerable more interest in municipal politics than do the women of other trade unions. This gives rise to many rumors that the waitresses include within their membership women who serve, from time to time, at least, in the type of cafe and resort which is always a factor in the darker side of municipal corruption. It is reported from numerous sources also that politicians of a certain class make use of the favor of the waitresses because the publicity of their work throws them in contact with people whom they wish to influence. All this is mere rumor, however. But, whatever the reasons and whatever conclusions it may suggest, it is undoubtedly true that the waitresses mix into municipal politics, and that during some administrations they have received marked favors in the way of municipal positions.

The waitresses union presents an interesting study of accomplishment. Its problems have been and are peculiarly difficult. It has moulded together a class of workers who are notably hard to weld. Unionism has taken this drifting, uncertain class and organized them into a body which has succeeded in establishing the occupation upon the basis of a standardized trade commanding a recognized wage and hours. Upon such a basis the work itself can command a respect which has been withheld, we should say unjustly, and with this much done, the union is in a fair position to solve some of the other problems which make life hard and sad for the girl who must seek her living in a none too generous nor sympathetic society.

BOOT AND SHOE WORKERS' UNION

The distinction of being the first women to receive recognition as delegates to the Council of Federated Trades belongs to those employed in the shoe industry.[1] Theirs was the first organization coherent enough to demand a voice for women in the general direction of matters concerning labor. The girls employed in a shoe factory instituted a strike over hours, wages, and shop conditions in January, 1891, and formed the Boot and Shoe Fitters' Protective Union. A lengthy discussion ensued in the Council of Federated Trades to decide upon the propriety of seating the two women elected as delegates to that body. Many of the men felt that to admit women would be a serious departure from the practice and tradition established toward employed women. The opponents of the women argued that their presence would occasion embarrassment, restrain freedom of expression, and introduce a disrupting element. In the end the delegates were seated.

The Shoe Fitters' Union continued as an organization separate from the men for about nine years, and then, rather curiously, they lost their identity and became a part of the men's union because they were forced into a sympathetic strike with the men over a cause in which they felt little interest. In October, 1900, trouble started in the shoe factory over an order by the firm to two welters in the bottoming department which, it was alleged, would reduce the pay. The men were told to dip insoles by single pairs instead of by the dozen. The work would take much longer, and the men, who were at piece-work, could not earn as much by this method. The firm suggested that the men might hire a boy to do the wetting. This would cost the men $3 out of their weekly earnings of $18 to $21, and they declared that the firm must pay for the extra help. The trouble was referred to a committee of five, one of whom was the secretary of the men's union. Immediately after the meeting with the employer, the secretary of the union was discharged from the factory. This action occasioned much indignation among the workers. The men in the

[1] Interview with Mr. Walter Macarthur.

same department as the secretary walked out at once, and the next day the men in the other departments decided not to return to work until the discharged secretary was reinstated.[2] The 85 girls in the shoe-fitting department were constrained to join the strike.

That the girls were out of sympathy with the action of the men is evident from the opinions they voiced at the time. "A score or more of the girls out of employment," writes one newspaper reporter, "when seen yesterday were outspoken in their opinion that the men should get over their squabbles and give them a chance to go to work again."[3]

"They forget," said one, "that we earn very little at the best, and this strike is not at all pleasant to us, no matter who is in the right or in the wrong."

Although the employer stoutly maintained that the reason for the discharge of the secretary had nothing to do with his connection with the union, but had resulted from his being habitually late and inattentive to work, after two days he was reinstated. It was decided that the men would not have to change the method of wetting the stock, or if they did, that the firm should pay the extra cost of employing a boy. The firm was in no position to hold out against its hands, for it was in the midst of work upon a government contract and could not keep the establishment closed without suffering great loss.[4]

The women's organization came to an end directly after this trouble,[5] nor have women taken any active part in union matters since. The few who do belong to a union are members of the general organization composed of both men and women and number only 39 in a membership of 130.

The Boot and Shoe Workers have had two strikes since 1900; one in 1909 resulted from a reduction in wages and ended successfully for the union. The issue did not stay settled, however, for in 1910 the same trouble arose and a satisfactory termination to the discussion has not yet been reached.[6]

[2] *San Francisco Examiner*, October 9, 1900.
[3] *San Francisco Examiner*, October 10, 1900.
[4] *Ibid.*, October 11, 1900.
[5] Interview with Mr. Walter Macarthur.
[6] The secretary of the Boot and Shoe Workers furnished the facts about the present organization.

GLOVE WORKERS, NO. 39[1]

The history of the Glove Workers' Union has been checkered and intermittent. The first organization was in 1885, but it lasted only a year and accomplished nothing. Seventeen years later, in 1902, the men and women in the glove industry united once more with a membership of 420. The direct cause of the formation of a union was the desire for a change in working conditions. The employees felt that the wage was too low, and the girls were indignant over the charge of fifty cents for power and fifty cents for rent of machinery which was exacted from them each month.

The factory proprietors were unwilling to meet the demands of the workers, so, in consequence, the new union went out on strike almost immediately after its organization. For eight weeks no agreement could be reached. The principle of the strike was upheld by the Labor Council, and that body and the other unions in the city furnished financial support. The end of the trouble was such that it is hard to determine where victory rested. Some of the proprietors refused to make any concessions, and their employees drifted back to work on the old terms, severing by degrees their connection with the union. This dwindling in numbers was a decided loss to the power of the organization. On the other hand, some of the factories agreed to grant certain changes which the workers demanded and to recognize the union. In these shops the employees received an increase of about twenty per cent in wages, and a reduction of the charge for power and machinery from 50 cents to 25 cents. While not gaining all they had hoped, at least the glove workers established a foothold.

The union continued to exist uneventfully until the earthquake of April, 1906. All the glove factories were destroyed and for several months no indication was shown that the industry

[1] The president of the union, Mr. Mahoney, and Mr. Paul Scharrenberg furnished the history of this union. Factories have also been visited.

would be renewed in San Francisco. Three or four months later one factory started anew in West Berkeley, across the bay. This firm desired the union label and gathered together a small number of the old organization for operators. At this time all charges for power and machinery were abolished and a wage slightly higher than that given before was paid.

For five years San Francisco had no union of glove workers, for the old firms moved into the smaller communities away from the city, and the few small shops which remained opened as non-union establishments. In 1911, the factory which had been located in West Berkeley secured quarters in San Francisco. The union was disorganized for about six months at the time of the move, but formed again at the wish of the proprietor, who desired the use of the label.

It is not surprising to find in view of its history that the Glove Workers' Union numbers only thirty-five members. Since its re-establishment in San Francisco, the leaders are making an effort to spread its influence and enlarge the number. It cannot be a very powerful union, however, for only 100 people are engaged in the trade; the hope for expansion lies in the factories which moved into the smaller towns around the bay. They are gradually recognizing the union, chiefly, it must be said, because of the effect the use of the label has on the sale of the class of gloves made.

The work of a glove maker is highly skilled, calling for unusual dexterity and judgment. The girls say that they like the work and consequently but little shifting occurs in the personnel of the workers. The piece-payment system determines the wage, so considerable variation in the amounts earned is shown. Skill, length of time necessary to learn the process in which the operator is engaged, the responsibility involved, and the judgment required, all count in determining the rate of payment. The average earning is $12, but it is not uncommon to find girls who receive $14, $16, and $17 a week. No minimum wage is established. One girl who had been ill and who was learning a new machine on her return to work earned only $6. A limit has never been set to the number of apprentices.

The women members of the Glove Makers' Union are of all ages, and are almost all Americans. Although the women outnumber the men in the union, they do not take much interest in its affairs; in fact, they refuse to hold office, and leave the business and direction of the union almost entirely in the hands of the men.

UNSUCCESSFUL ATTEMPTS AT ORGANIZATION[1]

A few attempts at organization among women have failed to become permanent. An account of them consists of little more than an enumeration, for their existence was transitory.

In 1906, the telephone girls struck because of long hours, low pay, and various personal indignities which they suffered from the men in charge of the office. Ten per cent to twenty per cent of the women joined the union which was formed at that time. The employers would concede nothing and the girls gradually drifted back to work and the union dissolved. The girls who were employed at the time of the trouble all say, however, that conditions were remedied.

The flour and cereal mill workers have been organized several times, but the girls never agree or remain together for any length of time.

The bag workers in one of the San Francisco factories organized several years ago because they were imposed upon in the matter of wages and shop conditions. They at once instituted a strike and the employers conceded the demands of the girls. They went back to work and the union soon ceased to exist.

The box makers have been organized, but the union among the women soon died out. Most of the employees are young girls.

After the eight-hour day for women went into effect about twenty of the girls employed in the rope industry were told to teach their work to boys. Believing this to mean that all the eighty women were eventually to be replaced by men, the women struck against the order given to the twenty girls, with the result that they were all discharged at once and their places filled by men. The occupation involves heavy lifting and work over machinery which a woman's clothing renders particularly dangerous. It is a trade illy suited to girls, and the change to men seems to be desirable. The girls, however, came to the officials of the Labor Council and appealed for interference declaring their intention of forming a union. For such a case, naturally, the labor officials refused their support.

[1] Mr. Paul Scharrenberg, secretary of the State Federation of Labor, supplied this information.

A SURVEY OF OBSERVATIONS

After a study of the women in trade unions and their position in the industrial life of the community, one naturally notes certain common features in their situation which seem to be directly due to organization. These characteristics which differentiate them from the general mass of the wage-earning women, will, obviously, be displayed in wages, hours, and shop conditions, but also, and, not the least importantly and significantly, in the personnel developed by organization.

Reviewing the effect of trade-unionism upon the wages paid to women, a few conclusions present themselves definitely. In every instance a rise in wages has followed almost immediately after a union was formed, and no explanation presents itself other than the influence of the organized action of the workers. The laundry workers forced an increase of about thirty per cent in the wage scale as soon as they asserted themselves as a united body, an action taken because attempts to better their lot by ordinances, laws, and outside regulation had failed. The bindery women, after six months of studying their own condition, were struck by certain facts about the steady decrease in wages which they had undergone that had failed to impress them until they met together in their union. They then demanded an increase for the unskilled workers of $1 a week more than the skilled had been receiving, and for the more efficient workers, an increase of $3 a week over the wage in force at the time of organization. While it required a strike to gain the point, the girls secured the increased wage purely by concerted action. The press feeders, while few in number, shared in the increase forced by the strike of 1905, a strike in which they played an active part until the desired condition was secured. The women of the Typographical Union present, from the earliest days, a marked contrast to the unorganized workers. They received $18 to $25 a week in the union shops, while the girls in other shops were paid only from $2.50 to $8 a week. Although the waitresses failed to force a

higher wage for all the girls by means of a strike when they were first organized, they did establish their standard for a few, and it was directly due to the influence of organized action that they persistently pushed this standard until it has extended to the majority of the waitresses in San Francisco. While in certain lines, such as the garment trades and restaurant work, the higher wage might have come eventually, for, at present, the unorganized workers in these lines do receive the same wage as the union women, still, even in such instances, it certainly was the union that made the girls of the trade self-conscious agents in forcing the wage promptly to a higher level and in taking the initiative in setting a standard. In other trades, notably the laundry workers, cracker workers, and bindery women, it is very doubtful whether any appreciable increase would have come at all without the union. Trade-unionism in San Francisco, then, where it has developed sufficient power to be a constructive factor, has established a higher level of wages for women.

When we consider changes in shop conditions, the laundry workers again present the most striking example of a change wrought by unionism. The cracker workers, the waitresses, the glove workers, and the garment workers all afford illustrations of various changes. The evils of speeding up and of certain conditions of work which were injurious to health were especially attacked by the cracker workers and remedied by the action of the union. Speeding is still a feature of this industry and has developed the only instance of sabotage as a means of reaching the employer. When the trays of cakes and crackers are pushed upon the girls at a rate beyond their ability to keep even, they have adopted the practice of casting the excess amount upon the floor or into the refuse box when the eyes of the foreman are removed for an instant. How far the union may sanction such tactics does not appear, but it would seem to be a matter of personal temperament rather than a recognized means of fighting, for it is not practiced in all the factories.

The waitresses directed their protest not only against low wages and long hours, but also against unsanitary conditions and inadequate working utensils and persisted in their demands until they finally secured proper shop conditions.

The glove workers and the garment workers both revolted against charges for machines, power, and necessary tools for labor. The abolishment of all such charges distinguishes the union shop, for they are still retained in a number of the non-union factories.

Such features as lunch rooms, rest rooms, and welfare secretaries are not included in the demand of any union. In fact, the union members are inclined to regard such movements on the part of the employer with a trace of suspicion that he may wish to use these improvements as an argument in his own favor in case higher wages were asked, a view they believe upheld by the fact that the establishments in the city which have done the most in the line of "welfare work" pay the lowest wages and are the least inclined to consider the point of view of the employees.

Trade-unionism has exercised a definite influence over the working hours, for they have been shortened and regulated in every instance. Most of the women in unions had the eight-hour day established long before the state law made it compulsory. It is not uncommon, however, to hear union women condemn a state law which prohibits women from working any overtime if they so desire. When the law first went into effect many resented it on the ground that it placed an unfair handicap upon women, since they must compete with men. In some industries they saw employment given to men because women could not work more than eight hours. The waitresses spoke especially of this result.[1]

The leaders in the Laundry Workers' Union favor the law on the ground that laundry work is so hard and involves such a severe strain that, even though the women wished to work longer, they ought not to be permitted to do so, for they will break down and lose in the end because of shortened years of capability. It was common for work in laundries to continue for an hour overtime, and, while the employees received the time-and-a-half rate for such work, those who favor the law declare that the money was not equal in its compensation to the advantages of an hour free for rest and recreation. Among the rank and file of the laundry workers considerable dissatisfaction was voiced at first.

[1] Since the interview with Miss Andrews in which this information was obtained, a movement has been instituted to establish the eight-hour day by union rule for men working at this trade.

The law made a difference of several dollars a week in the amount that many of the women earned by putting in overtime, and they missed the additional money.

The bindery women felt the effect of the new law and were quite universal and open in their disapproval of the strict limit upon their working hours. During the busy season they all added substantially to their regular wages by doing extra work, Since the regular employees cannot now undertake this extra work, the binderies have had great difficulty in finishing orders promptly. The union had to give up its exclusive privilege of supplying workers through its office because the membership was not equal to the demand in the busy seasons. This means that the proprietor now secures any girl he can find and the new worker is then taken into the union. This increases the number of members who are occasional and less skilled workers and lowers the general tone of the trade, making it difficult for the union to keep up its standard of efficiency which had been a matter of pride and upon which the union founded the justification of its minimum wage demand. It must be said, however, that opinions on the eight-hour law and its effects are not stated as conclusive by any of the women. Discussion of its possible dangers as well as its benefits is natural. The girls in the trades which had not established an eight-hour day previous to the passing of the act have only favorable words for the law.

Among the benefits derived by women from trade unions, many of the most important are intangible, belonging to those subtle educational and social results which cannot be tabulated. The girls in discussing their unions all dwell upon these benefits as among the chief advantages they have experienced through their organization. To the girl facing the world in open battle for her living, the union offers a protection not to be lightly weighed in its social consequences. She always has friends who will come to her aid if she is out of work or in need, who will visit her if she is ill, supply her with proper care, and free her mind from anxiety about money necessities. This mutual assistance is accepted readily enough from union members where it would be resented or attended with humiliation if it came from outside. In fact, the working girls regard with resentment much

of the so-called "social work," feeling that those who presume to improve their condition are undertaking to do so in a patronizing spirit which lacks the foundation of real knowledge and sympathy with their problems. The trade union woman has this feeling strongly developed. She is convinced that the laboring people themselves are more competent to work out a solution of their difficulties than any outsider could be. In much of the "social work" the women who have been trained in a trade union see nothing more than the evidence of the distinctions and barriers which have stood in the way of the workers gaining a hearing. They desire that independent self-respect shall be the recognized and established right of each person, and that industrial conditions shall be adjusted to make this possible. Philanthropic efforts in their behalf do not meet with their favor, for much of such effort appears to them an insolent intrusion or an attempt to substitute an inadequate palliative for a living wage. To them, the trade union with its power to educate the worker and to make effective the demands of the worker offers the proper medium for the solution of their difficulties.

As an educational stimulant, trade-unionism has undoubtedly been one of the most enlightening forces for development which has affected the wage-earning woman. Questions about industrial conditions come to her attention with real significance when she feels that through her union she may have a voice in deciding the answers to such questions. Among the leading women in the unions one meets with much clear and vital thinking and a broad wisdom touched with humor. At her meetings the trade union member must accustom herself to expressing her opinions. This drill develops a poise and self-confidence which makes it easier to face situations outside of union halls.

This realization of the power to be gained through organization and the need for the workers to watch out for their own interests led the women in the trade unions to take prompt action when California granted the suffrage to women. They almost immediately formed the "Humane Legislation League" and raised the funds for opening an office and paying a secretary to carry on the work of the league. Its purpose is to see that all the women from families of working people shall register and to

carry on a campaign of education on all the political questions with special emphasis upon those which directly concern the working class.

Women are less apt to be aggressive in their manner of making demands than are men and the men have criticised their more patient methods of working gradually toward a desired result. The women hold that their way of handling difficulties results in less friction and gains them a readier hearing in the long run. For the same reason women favor the industrial form of organization. Jurisdictional disputes do not sap their time and strength. Thus the laundry workers employed in garment factories belong to the union of garment workers and all women who work in binderies are included in one union instead of being divided according to occupation as is common elsewhere.

While it is true that men were first in the field of organized action and have frequently been the instigators of organization among women, they have not dictated the terms of the demands the women saw fit to make. The attitude of the men when they first encouraged women to form unions was actuated not so much by the desire to better conditions for women as by the spirit of self-protection from the effect that women's competition threatened to have in causing wages to fall. This is marked in the earlier days of the movement when we find numerous complaints such as this, "While women have not been benefited to any considerable extent through the throwing open to her, of late years, of avenues of employment hitherto monopolized by men, the earnings of men have been reduced."[1] This hostile attitude broke out into open contention between the men and women in several instances, notably among the garment workers and the laundry workers. The men cutters discovering that the women would hold out for their own points were not satisfied to remain in the same union with them and were allowed to withdraw, but the women have since persistently refused to readmit the men. In the first days of organization the men in the laundry workers union attempted to submit a wage schedule which called for an increased wage for the branches at which men were employed but left the women on the old basis. The men knew

[1] *Coast Seamen's Journal*, April 1, 1891.

that the employers would doubtless grant the larger wage to a part of the workers but that trouble might ensue if all the workers demanded more. The women refused any support to the measure and held out until the demand for a higher wage was extended to every branch. Where men and women work at the same branch of a trade the women, of course, receive the same wage as the men and there is no ground for controversy. Experience in contesting for their rights in union halls seems to have developed leaders among the trade union women. Wages, hours, and shop conditions have all shown the impress of the influence exerted by the organized action of the workers. But, if wages, hours, and shop conditions did not enter into the question at all, still trade unionism among women would show its results in a higher moral tone made possible by the security which comes from the knowledge that there are friends who will protect in time of trouble and offer hope for better days; it would display its influence in a more awakened and trained intelligence; it would make evident its effect in a happier attitude toward the day's work, arising from the fact that the worker herself has studied her industry and has participated in determining the conditions under which she earns her livelihood.

APPENDIX

The following are characteristic of the letters and printed matter sent out by the Anti-Jap Laundry League:

FORM 1

"In behalf of the white boys and girls engaged in the laundry business of this city, we most urgently request your personal and earnest consideration to the following:

"The laundry industry, which has given to a considerable portion of our citizens a fair and substantial means of earning a livelihood is gradually being monopolized by Asiatic competition. According to reliable statistics the increase in the number of Japanese laundries during the past two years has been over 100 per cent.

"The continuation of this appalling rate means practically the elimination of our race from this field of industry. To prevent such a consumation we make a personal appeal to you (patron of a Japanese laundry) as a fellow-citizen of this community—asking you to make it possible through your patronage to give our boys and girls a fair chance of earning a White Man's Living in a White Man's Country.

"In this connection we point out a significant fact—that the Japanese, by no means, contribute toward your subsistence, and therefore have no claim upon your sympathy or support. On the other hand, the White Race, off whom you make your living exclusively, is entitled to your first consideration and patronage.

"Place yourself in a similar position to ours. If the Japs should invade your field of industry to the extent of forcing you to the wall (which is a possibility) would you not be entitled and justified in demanding the moral support of your fellow men and women to assist you in resisting the Mongolian invasion, that threatened your separation from the bread-and-butter necessities of life.

"Under these circumstances are we asking too much of you to desist from patronizing Japanese laundries?

"Hoping to hear from you we remain,

"Respectfully,

"ANTI-JAP LAUNDRY LEAGUE."

FORM 2

"We desire to call your attention to a subject to which perhaps you have given but little, if any, thoughtful consideration and yet it is one that to a great extent menaces your individual prosperity.

"Perhaps you do not realize that you are rendering aid and financial support to those who are more than likely later on to encroach upon your present means of earning a living. We refer to the fact that if our various sources of information be correct a Jap calls for and receives your laundry each week.

"We cheerfully concede your right to patronize whom you choose. We are simply appealing to your sense of right and justice to others of your own Race.

"At present, among the limited avenues of employment open to women, a great many White Girls depend upon the laundries as their means of support. To you comes the question direct—a question that is in your power to answer:

"For the few cents a week difference in your laundry bill, can you afford to help make life harder for our working girls by favoring the Jap, who has no interests in common with your own? By patronizing a Jap you help reduce the White Girls' Standard of Living and you are also advertising the Jap—for a Japanese laundry wagon at your door means that others, seeing your example, may be inclined to follow it.

"Again we appeal to you to look at the matter from this point of view, feeling fully confident that when it comes to a question of White or Jap you can but decide in favor of your own Race, on whom you also depend for your means of Happiness and Prosperity.

"Will you help us maintain White Man's Standard in a White Man's Country? Believing you will, we remain,

Respectfully,

"ANTI-JAP LAUNDRY LEAGUE."

FORM 3

"DEAR SIR:—In the battle we are waging on behalf of the white Women and Girls of our city, who are gradually being forced out of an avenue of employment that rightfully belongs to them, by Japanese competition, a competition that no one can successfully meet and maintain a White Man's Standard of Living, we have learned much to our satisfaction that only a very small percentage of Union people are giving their patronage to the Japs—and have upon our files letters from a great many Unions, including your own, informing us that a fine will be exacted from any member found guilty of patronizing Jap laundries.

"Evidence that to us seems conclusive has been received at our Headquarters, to wit:—That on Saturday, October 3rd, about 3 P.M., you entered a Jap laundry on Laguna street, receiving therefrom a package of laundry. That the cordialities exchanged between yourself and the Jap therein, indicated that you were one of his regular customers. From said laundry you wended your way to the headquarters of your Union, carrying said package of laundry with you.

"While we concede to every man and woman the right to bestow their patronage upon whom they may choose—we hold that no **UNION MAN, ENJOYING THE BENEFITS OF AN INCREASED WAGE AND BETTER WORKING CONDITIONS**, can consistently, by spending his money with Oriental or SCAB LABOR, deny to others the benefits he is himself receiving as a member of a Labor Union.

"We would be pleased to have an expression of your sentiments along these lines, for the reason that before bringing such cases to the attention of the Union, of which we presume you are a member, we would give you a chance to reply, fully believing that did you even slightly realize the grave dangers menacing nearly every industrial line in our city and state from this blight of Jap competition, you would conclude that not even 'a discount of 15 per cent on bundles over one dollar' would be enough inducement for you to aid a race that so gravely menaces our future prosperity.

"Sincerely yours,

"ANTI-JAP LAUNDRY LEAGUE."

CAN WE COUNT ON YOU?

"FELLOW CITIZEN:—

"Is a white man or a Japanese handling your laundry work?

"The laundry industry, which has given to a considerable portion of our citizens a fair means of earning a livelihood is being gradually monopolized by unfair Asiatic competition. Perhaps you do not know that there are over twenty large Japanese laundries in this City, and that Japanese competition in the laundry business has increased over 100 per cent within the last two years.

"And what, we ask you, will this success of the Japanese in the laundry business, if not checked, result in? For an answer, look at the condition of the Hawaiian Islands where Japs do 75 per cent of all work, where almost every business, professional and otherwise, is controlled by the cunning Oriental, and where the population, once white, is now mainly yellow.

"How long will it be, think you, before this tide of Asiatic Competition will have swept away the business of American tailors, grocers, retail dry goods stores and shoe stores.

"How long, Mr. Mechanic, Mr. Electrician, Mr. Chauffeur, do you think it will be before the Japanese students of our technical schools will be underbidding you?

"How long, Mr. Bank Clerk, Mr. Lawyer, Mr. College Professor, do you think it will be before even your dignified calling will be invaded by the Japs?

"As things are now, it will not be long, dear reader, until public opinion, having become calloused by continual meeting and patronage of the Jap in easily assailable occupations, will accept his services in all lines.

"HELP US NOW, THEN, DEAR FRIEND, TO FIGHT THIS FIGHT, WHILE YET IT MAY BE FOUGHT. Believe us, be convinced that we and the other industries already attacked are but the van of the great bulk of California industrial and merchant classes that this yellow wave is surely and by no means slowly reaching.

"We appeal especially to you, Mr. Union Man, and to you Mr. Small Merchant. It is not only your laundry business we want, we want you to help bring your friends.

"HELP US TO CREATE A PUBLIC SENTIMENT IN THIS MATTER.

"THINK ABOUT IT. READ ABOUT IT. TALK IT OVER.

"ANTI-JAP LAUNDRY LEAGUE."

MEN AND WOMEN!

Protect Your Homes from

Loathsome Oriental Diseases!

"That the patrons of Oriental wash-houses are constantly exposing themselves to dangerous diseases is obvious from the complaints of the Health Officer on Japanese laundries, of which the following extract is a sample:

"'**The walls and ceilings of the rear portion of the laundry, together with those portions occupied as places of lodgings, are encrusted with filth and dirt and in part denuded of paper; further, the wooden flooring of that portion used as a laundry is in close proximity to the surface soil, forming A FAVORABLE PLACE FOR THE HARBORING AND BREEDING OF RATS AND OTHER VERMIN, ALL OF WHICH CREATES AN UNSANITARY CONDITION THAT IS A NUISANCE AND MENACE TO LIFE AND HEALTH.**'

"Further, the Japs eat, sleep, drink and smoke in the same room in which your laundry work is done.

"This, exclusive of the injury you are inflicting upon your white brothers and sisters by forcing them from the employment that rightfully belongs to them, should cause you to consider well before again patronizing an Oriental laundry.

"Are you willing, for the purpose of saving a few cents per week, to endanger the health of yourself and those near and dear to you?

"Shun the JAPANESE LAUNDRIES. They are the breeding places of Oriental diseases.

"ANTI-JAP LAUNDRY LEAGUE."

WILL THE JAPANESE PREDOMINATE?

"Shall it be that the Japanese element of the Pacific Coast will control our affairs, or will they be subject to the dominant influence of their predecessors, the Caucasians?

"The answer depends entirely upon the action taken now by the White Race. If we stand idly by, while the Japanese monopolize industry after industry, will we have just cause for complaint after our Western Civilization has been absorbed by the Asiatics and their Oriental morals and cheap standards of living?

"Are you aware of the fact that the Japanese have practically monopolized nearly every line of business in the Hawaiian Islands, and are in control of fully 90 per cent of the industrial fields?

"Do you realize that the Japanese have conquered our Vaca Valley, are making vast inroads in the San Joaquin Valley, are monopolizing the vineyards in Fresno County, and are in complete control of the potato output of the state and have increased the price of this commodity fully 75 per cent.

"If you doubt the dangers resulting from Japanese occupation and competition in our midst, consider well these official figures: Despite the financial stringency of the times, the little brown men are shipping annually to Japan from San Francisco, Seattle and Honolulu, over $10,000,000.00.

"This is not merely a future, but a PRESENT DANGER, most grave and alarming. Take for instance the Laundry Industry. This business which has given to a considerable portion of our citizens a fair means of earning a livelihood, is being rapidly monopolized by Asiatics. Perhaps you do not know that there are eighteen large Japanese laundries in San Francisco at the present time, and this competition in the laundry business has increased over 100 per cent in San Francisco and San Mateo counties within the past two years.

"And the tide of Asiatic competition is already reaching the American tailors, grocers, retail dry goods merchants, shoe dealers, etc. How long, then we ask you, will it be before you find yourself in the same position as the Laundry people, with the same gigantic struggle confronting you?

"And to you Mr. Capitalist. If it is possible for the Japanese to completely monopolize a residential section, as they have in certain parts of this city, can they not spread this monopolization at will? And is the desirability of a residential section, or the value of adjacent property, enhanced by the presence of these Orientals?

"The solution of the problem lies with the people. The only way to successfully combat the inroads of the Japanese is to refuse to patronize or employ them in any of their industries.

"ANTI-JAP LAUNDRY LEAGUE."